

OVER THE DEAD LINE  
OR  
TRACKED BY BLOOD-HOUNDS

BY

S. M. DUFUR



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WALTER R. STEINER  
COLLECTION \_\_\_\_\_





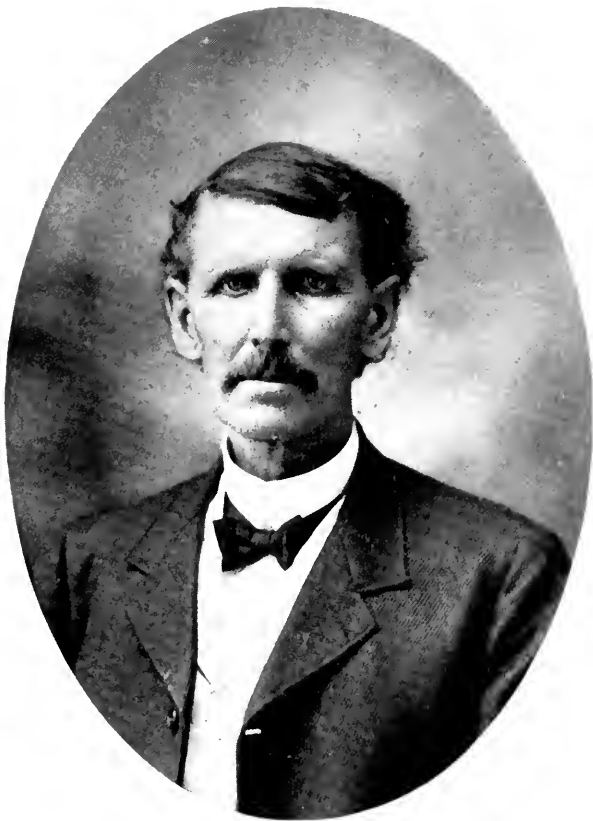






S. M. DUFUR AT 19.

This photograph was taken while the author was on a furlough, fifteen days before he was taken prisoner.



S. M. DUFUR AT 59.

Photographed by F. W. Wheeler & Son, Richford, Vt.



# *Over the Dead Line*

OR

## *Tracked by Blood-Hounds*

**G***IVING the Author's personal experience during eleven months that he was confined in Pemberton, Libby, Belle Island, Andersonville, Ga., and Florence, S. C., as a prisoner of war. Describing plans of escape, arrival of prisoners, his escape and recapture; with numerous and varied incidents and anecdotes of his prison life. . . . .*

BY  
*Simon M. Dufur*  
**S. M. DUFUR**

*Company B, 1st Vermont Cavalry*

*War of 1861-5*

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WILLIAM H. STEINER  
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## PREFACE.

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In preparing this little volume, I have had an eye, not so much to a literary production, as to give in compliance with the oft repeated request of friends and relatives, a simple and truthful account of my experience in the prison pens of the South during the Great American Rebellion. This Great Republic was at that time divided against itself. The Northern and the Southern people were enemies to each other, and although I was forced to believe by the treatment to which I was subjected at the hands of my captors, that it was their deliberate intention to destroy me, I can say, that it is with no feeling of hatred or revenge that I now give to my posterity a truthful account of what I saw and suffered.

THE AUTHOR.

Richford Vt., Dec. 8th, 1902.





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## OVER THE DEAD LINE.

### CHAPTER I.

It is March, A. D. 1901. The lofty hills of the old Green Mountain State have not yet put off their white robes of frost and snow, although the sun's bright rays have already commenced their work of devastation upon the spotless garments that for months have clothed their fertile valleys.

Nineteen hundred and one. Peace and Unity reign supreme. Moving columns of men, armed and equipped, huge war vessels moving from port to port, bearing thousands of mammoth cannon and trained men, panting horses eager for the charge, glittering bayonets, and the silvery notes of the bugle echoing o'er the tent-covered hills and valleys, are things of the past.

More than a third of a century since the first shot echoed from the walls of Sumter. More than the average number of years allotted to man have passed, since that shot proclaimed to the world that one of the greatest and most powerful nations of the earth, was divided against itself. Yes! War was declared, the first gun fired, and

from mansion to cabin, from metropolis to hamlet, from the Atlantic to the Pacific the news flashed that by traitorous hands, the old flag had been ruthlessly torn from its proud position, to be trampled beneath the brutal foot of secession.

“To arms! To arms!” was the pass-word of every American patriot. We see and hear the people making preparations for war. We hear the appeal of the orator, the notes of the bugle and the din of the boisterous drums, mingling with the commands of officers, who are endeavouring to form and reform their inexperienced, though patriotic, volunteers previous to their departure for scenes that in after years were proudly described to their children and grand-children. The dim eye of the veteran shines, as in imagination it again flashes along the glittering barrel of his trusty weapon, or as he exhibits the empty sleeve, or again relates the many thrilling experiences and startling events that emblazon the pages of his past history. None but those who were eye-witnesses and saw the young volunteer of 1861, as he marched proudly away under the flaunting flag, keeping time to the wild, grand music of war—none but those who knew him then and now, can realize the changes that time has

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wrought. Those who participated in that hard fought and closely contested struggle for rights and liberty, who then possessed health, youth and vigor, are to-day aged and decrepit. The once lithesome step is now slow. We see the bowed form and the trembling limbs; we see him wrestling with aches and pains, which remind him that ere long, will be mustered out, the last of those who in this Great Rebellion placed their all upon their country's altar. The past rises before him like a dream. Again he is in the great struggle for National life. He sees his countrymen as they enlist in the great army of freedom. He sees them part with those they love; he hears tender vows of affection as they lingeringly separate, perhaps forever. Some are bending over cradles, kissing sleeping children, while others are parting with fond mothers, who with maternal affection hold and press them again and again to their hearts, grief preventing speech. He sees them part: now the wife is standing at the door with the babe in her arms, and at the turn of the road the husband's hand is seen waving her and his child farewell. He goes with the husbands and fathers; he is by their side on the bloody fields of battle; in hospitals of pain; on the weary marches, and standing guard in storms and

under the quiet stars. He sees them pierced by balls and torn by shells in the trenches, wild from thirst, the life-blood ebbing slowly away.

Thousands, yes, millions of men and women are alive to-day, who in some way, either directly or indirectly, were connected with that terrible struggle, when nearly three million responded to the call for true and loyal men to defend the Nation's Flag, and to sustain the rights of freedom and independence for which their ancestors so heroically fought. Yes, fathers, mothers and their children have been born since the first traitorous hand was raised against that emblem of freedom that our forefathers redeemed with blood and long-suffering, and which they swore to maintain. Many years have passed and gone, many winter snows and summer rains have fallen upon the last resting places of those who, through dangers seen and unseen, stood by their country's flag until final victory.

And thus the writer, as one of the survivors of those eventful days, is reminded that this first day of March, A. D. nineteen hundred and one, is the anniversary of an "event" connected with those days of carnage and strife. It is an event that should be handed down from genera-



tion to generation, that our posterity may be truthfully informed in regard to the terrible sufferings and privations of those who courageously faced danger and death that the Union might be preserved.

Statistics show that 25,840 Union soldiers perished in Andersonville and Salisbury alone, to say nothing of Florence, Libby, Belle-Island and many other places where Union prisoners were confined, and of the many thousands whose iron constitutions carried them through the trying ordeal, but who came out physical wrecks.

In the fall of 1865, the writer was honorably discharged from the first and only regiment of cavalry that was recruited from among the loyal and sturdy sons of the old Green Mountain State. During the four years, this regiment participated in many a hard fought battle. Seventy-five general engagements and skirmishes are credited to its war record from April 16th, 1862—when its first charge was made upon the enemy at Mt. Jackson, Va.—to April 9th, 1865, at Appomatox, where it received, and in part executed, the last order given for a cavalry charge, in the army of the Potomac.

It is upon this cold and dreary March day, the thirty-seventh anniversary of General Kilpatrick's famous raid,

wherein the 1st Vermont Cavalry took a prominent part, that I take from the dust-covered board, the worn and faded memorandum, that for many years has lain unmo-  
lest in the old attic chest.

As I pause for a moment to peruse the dim lines that time has nearly erased, I ask myself, "Is this real? Did I write these lines in such a terrible place, and while surrounded by scenes that almost baffle description?"

Yes. Each page, grim with age, bears undisputable evidence of sickness, starvation and death. I am looking upon the same lines that thirty-seven years ago I wrote while the pangs of hunger, the ravages of disease and the burning rays of a southern sun were doing their awful work.

I carefully lift the first tender leaf. My now impaired vision rests upon the nearly obliterated words:

March 2nd. Taken prisoner last night. I am badly wounded, and in Libby prison. What misery I behold."

"March 3rd. Dick Turner, the commanding officer, told six of us, who were with Dahlgren's command, that we would be shot. We are not guilty. Have not yet had my wounds dressed. God help us, in this our suffering condition."

"4th. They accuse us of murdering women and children. The Richmond papers call us murderers. The guard told us to-day that there is no hope for us."

"5th. I asked Dick Turner for some crutches; he replied, 'No, you will be in h—l with your commanding officer, before you have a chance to use them'. We are more afraid of being lynched, than of being shot. On Bell-Island I found boys I knew."

"6th. O how I suffer. If I am murdered or die, and this book is saved, never let it be seen by my father or mother. God knows I am not guilty of any crime. I only did a soldier's duty."

As I glance at these minute memoranda, reading here and there a few words, I notice that months have passed, since, with a trembling hand I wrote, "Have just been taken prisoner. They tell me I am to be shot. I am badly wounded," etc., and instead of March, I see July, August and September. In an entry made July 24th, I read:

"Another has been taken from our family—Frank B. Jocelyn, of our company. How poor Frank wanted to live. He gave me a message to carry to his widowed mother, should I live to go out."

"July 26th. The members of our family, who are gradually growing fewer in number, to-day mourn the loss of another—Milo Farnsworth. I found him dead at my side, at three o'clock this morning. He died between the hours of twelve and three."

"July 27th. One hundred and sixty-three deaths during the past twenty-four hours. Report says that cholera is in camp. God help us if this is true."

"28th. Two men were shot near the south gate, for stepping beyond the Dead Line. Capt Wirz said to-day that we would soon be paroled."

"August 2nd. The heat is suffocating. I counted 177 dead bodies at the gate, awaiting the last act of the drama—to be drawn away, and like dead dumb beasts, thrown into a trench. The stench arising from the dead bodies at the gate, and the excremental matter in the swamp, and other parts of the prison, make the air almost stifling."

Such are a few of the reminiscences recorded in this little book, by the aid of which, I shall endeavor to portray to the reader the thrilling and heart-rendering scenes that came under my observation during nearly one year that I was confined in the Confederate prison pens of the South.

## CHAPTER II.

It was during the winter of 1863-4, and while the 1st Vermont Cavalry, of which I was a member, was lying in winter quarters at Stevensburg, Va., that the order was given from the War Department, to recruit from the ranks, or in other words, re-enlist all three years' men who had already served two years of their time. The inducements held out to the men for this extra two years' service, were that they should receive \$402 bounty, and a thirty days' furlough. Many accepted this offer, myself being one of that number.

At the end of thirty days the veterans came straggling into camp by twos and threes, and by the 25th of February, the men were all back at their old quarters, and doing picket duty on the Rapidan river.

It was about this time and on a clear, cold February morning, just as the first welcome rays of light were seen in the eastern horizon, that I was seated upon the back of my faithful old war-horse, on a lonely picket-post situated near the summit of a hill which commanded a view of the Rapidan. For eight hours I had remained at my

post, eagerly watching for any unusual move of the enemy on one side, and for the relief guard on the other, when I saw by the motions of my horse, that either friend or foe was in the immediate vicinity of my post.

Reining my horse a few feet to the rear, where the wide-spreading branches of a mammoth pine tree entirely concealed my presence, I looked at my arms, and placed myself in an attitude of defense. I had not long to wait, as in a few moments I saw two horsemen approaching from the direction of the reserve post, and just as I gave the usual challenge of "Halt! Who goes there?" I discovered that it was two men from my own company, a Corporal and a new recruit, one of those who are enlisted to fill the ranks or places of those who have been killed or discharged. The Corporal had orders for me to report to my Company Headquarters at once, and the recruit was to take my place upon the picket-line. As I passed the reserve post on my way to camp, I was told by the officer in charge, that the cause of my not being relieved through the night, was, that the stars and moon shone so brightly, he did not think it advisable to move men along the side of the hill, as they could be seen by the enemy just across the river, therefore they could locate my post.

Arriving at camp, I received orders to be ready to march at a moment's notice; also an order was given for each man to draw three days' rations, and sixty rounds of ammunition. We had worn Uncle Sam's uniform long enough to learn that a moment's notice might mean thirty days or it might mean thirty hours, but the three days' rations, and sixty rounds of ammunition meant business in the near future.

All day, men could be seen congregated in small parties, eagerly discussing the probabilities of our intended move. Officers were hurrying to and fro, and in low tones giving orders, and answering the many inquiries in regard to our probable destination and invariably the answers were, "We know nothing about it."

Many of the boys wrote letters home, sending money or any article of value that they did not wish to have with them, should an engagement or a raid occur.

All that day,—February 26th, 1864,—the men were getting ready, for—they knew not what. All preparations were made as quietly as possible; no loud orders were given. Our winter quarters were left standing; and those who were excused from duty by the Doctor, and some of the new recruits, were to occupy them until the company

returned. None but veterans were to go, so we did not consider this would be a pleasure party by any means.

About sunset that night, our horses were saddled and bridled; the men with overcoats on, with sabres and revolvers hanging to their belts, walked up and down the company streets, talking in low tones.

No bugle sounded, but as daylight disappeared, and the shades of night brought out more prominently the many camp-fires that bespeak the intense darkness so soon to come upon us, each soldier distinctly heard the command, though in a low tone of voice, "Lead into line! Right dress! Number by fours! By fours! Right wheel! Forward, march!" and Kilpatrick's famous cavalry raid around Richmond had begun.

The objects of this raid were the liberation of the Union prisoners in that city; also the destruction of mills and army stores; the capture of the reserve artillery at Frederick's Hall Station, and the Virginia Railroad, and the distribution of President Lincoln's Amnesty Proclamation.

Kilpatrick started with six regiments of cavalry, consisting of some 4,000 men. The young and daring Colonel Dahlgren, who was Kilpatrick's second in this



enterprise, commanded a body of some four hundred men, consisting of detachments from the 1st Vermont, 2nd and 5th New York, 1st Maine, and 5th Michigan cavalry.

All night we marched through the rain and mud, and the following morning we were fairly in the rear of Lee's army. We were entirely cut off from all communication with our army; we had captured the enemy's picket-post, and no longer was our destination a secret. Soon after daylight, a halt was made long enough to feed our horses, then up and on to Richmond; tearing up railroad tracks, destroying telegraph lines, burning bridges, and making general destruction, as we advanced. The men were ordered to molest no one who did not molest them, and to enter no private dwelling. Most of the time during that long-to-be-remembered ride, the rain fell in torrents, rendering the roads almost impassable.

Colonel Dahlgren and his command fell into ambush, and he was killed, sixteen bullets passing through his head and body. His command became separated and the Vermont boys joined Kilpatrick's forces near Richmond. This was on March 1st, and during the afternoon of that day, Kilpatrick's men were drawn up in line before the fortifi-

cations at Richmond on the Brook turnpike, three and a half miles north of the city.

Judging the capture of Richmond to be impossible, Kilpatrick decided to move around the city and join General Butler at Yorktown. At 4 P. M. the column started, and after destroying two miles of the Fredericksburg railroad, moved on to Mechanicsville, six miles from Richmond.

Here, after destroying the railroad buildings and cutting the track, the men got an hour's rest. It was just after dark, when we turned off from the turnpike, and our regiment entered a small piece of pine woods. As soon as a halt was made, and our horses picketed, many of the men camped down at once. Both men and horses were suffering from want of food and rest; all the sleep that we had obtained during the past forty-eight hours, was while riding in the ranks with our heads resting upon the blankets that were rolled and strapped to the front of our saddles.

Comrade Horace B. Stetson and myself were tent-mates at the time, and while I was loosening the saddle-girths, and caring for our horses, Stetson spread out our wet blankets, and made us as comfortable a bed as he

could under the circumstances, as it was raining and snowing at the time. Our rubber blankets, however, partially protected us from the storm, and we were soon fast asleep. At 10.30, I was awakened by the report of artillery, immediately followed by the crashing of solid shot and shell through the tree-tops. At the report of the first gun, the bugle sounded "To horse!" and those who had not camped down for a little rest, and were running the risk of losing the much-needed sleep, in exchange for a cup of hot coffee, had a little advantage of those who were fast asleep; the latter springing from their beds in a bewildered state, scarcely knowing where they were. Small camp-fires were shining all through the woods, and as we entered after dark, knowing nothing of the lay of the ground, neither the points of the compass, and the dazzling camp-fires threw many of the men, especially those who were suddenly awakened, into a bewildered condition; it often happened that if one moved a few feet from his own quarters, he was completely lost, or "turned around." As the sound of the first gun startled me, I sprang from my bed, and shouted to my comrade, who slept more soundly than myself, to turn out, that the enemy had opened fire upon us. I then

looked for my horse, and after two or three minutes found him in almost an opposite direction from where I supposed I had left him. I was not long in arranging my saddle and bridle, and making a charge for the bed to secure my blankets, I was somewhat surprised to find my bed-fellow, Stetson, still quietly sleeping. I caught him by the foot and pulling him out of the bed, I again shouted that the Rebs. were shelling the camp.

This time he spoke, and proceeded to instill into my mind the contempt he felt for my self-imagined cunning, and that if I did not wish to sleep myself, I might allow others to do so.

“Boom! Boom!” again rang out the Rebel gun, immediately followed by the bursting of a shell, which cut short poor chummy’s scolding, and springing back into his bed upon his hands and knees, he threw the things right and left in searching for his cap, as he excitedly asked: “Why in thunder didn’t you wake me up?”

By this time the rebels had advanced to the edge of the woods, and soon a scattering fire of musketry commenced along the out-skirts. Lieut. Col. Preston, of the 1st Vermont, gave the order for his men to fall in on foot,

and soon quite a line of battle was formed between our horses and the enemy.

Thus far the enemy appeared to have everything about their own way, and most likely they mistook our silence for a preparation to retreat, but when our regiment opened fire with their Spencer carbines, they appeared somewhat surprised, and for a time their firing ceased altogether. After we had fired eight or ten rounds, in rapid succession, the order was given by Col. Preston, "Every man to his horse, and lead into line in the open field to the rear!"

This was the last order or command I ever heard from this brave and noble young officer, as he was killed on the 3rd of the following June.

While we were on the firing line, my horse escaped, or was by mistake taken by some one else; I never knew which, for I never saw him again. Anxiously going through the company, making inquiries from man to man, and from company to company, I heard some one a little distance away cry out, "Who wants a horse?" Hurrying as fast as I could to the spot where I had heard this question asked, I found an officer sitting upon his horse and

holding another by the bridle. He was a Colonel or a Lieutenant-Colonel, belonging to our brigade, and said his servant, a colored boy, who rode this horse, had been killed or taken prisoner, or had run away. After telling him to what regiment I belonged, he said I might take this horse till he called for it. I was very thankful for this kind act, and assuring the Colonel I would return the animal at any time after the skirmish was over, I mounted and galloped away in the direction of my regiment. The stirrup straps to my saddle were very short, and in my haste to rejoin my command, I had not taken time to lengthen them, and was thinking of doing so, when a shell from the enemy exploded near, causing the already excited horse to turn suddenly to one side, throwing me heavily to the ground. I was somewhat bruised by the fall, but gained my feet, and saw, by the dim light of the camp-fires, the horse of which I stood in so much need, disappear in the darkness.

A few moment's walk brought me to my regiment, which had just commenced to break off from the right by fours. I was anxiously looking and enquiring from one to the other, for a horse without a rider, when some one shouted from the front: "Say, there, you fellow who

wants a horse, there are two horses back in the wood from which we came." Of course I ran great risk in doing so, but at once started for the place indicated, and was soon stumbling over sticks, stones, and stumps, as I hastened from one dark object to another, in my endeavor to obtain the horse, and escape from the woods before the enemy should ascertain our movements. I entered the thicket as near as possible to where our company had camped, which was some twenty or thirty rods distant from the place whence I started upon this errand of such great importance to myself. I could hear the enemy cheering upon the opposite side of the woods, and I well knew that what was to be done, must be done quickly. I was about to give up, and return to my company, when to my joy and surprise, I espied the two horses standing within a few feet of each other. The first I came upon was a small black horse, one that was used as a pack horse to carry small articles, and evidently had been left, as he was tired out. Another stood near, and I almost cried with joy, when I discovered what I took to be my own faithful old "Blaze," as I called him; this horse, however, did not act like him, as he reared and plunged in a way that made it almost impossible for me to hold

him, or place my foot in the stirrup. It was during these efforts that I discovered the horse was not my own, but he looked so much like him, that in all probability mine was taken for him. Although this mistake caused me indescribable suffering, nearly costing me my life, I cannot say the blame rests upon any one.

I will for a moment leave my perilous situation to the imagination of the reader. Here was a dilemma from which the wealth of the Rosthchilds, or the influence and power of a monarch, could not extricate me. My life depended, as it were, for a few moments on the obedience of a horse. It is said by people who have narrowly escaped death after fully expecting it, that during an almost inconceivably short space of time, many past events of one's life are recalled to mind; and thus it was with me. During the fractional part of a minute that I so earnestly endeavored to calm that enraged and frightened animal, all the horrors of Libby, Castle Thunder, and Bell Island passed through my mind with the rapidity of lightning. Oh for a few moments of precious time! Seconds seemed minutes as I struggled for the mastery of the maddened brute. Fearing the reader may ask why I did not abandon the hope of aid from the horse and try to escape on



foot, I will say that for a pedestrian to keep up with a raiding party of horsemen, especially in the night, would be almost an impossibility.

With a howl like that of wild beasts, the enemy charged into the woods. I endeavored to mount without the assistance of the stirrup, but in this I failed, as the horse would go from under me before I could gain an upright position in my saddle. I well knew that my escape, if not my life, depended upon this horse, and so earnestly was I engaged that I did not consider how closely they were upon me, and just as I was hanging to the side of my horse, with my right leg hooked around the back of my saddle, I received a fearful sabre cut from the hand of a rebel horseman, who suddenly appeared upon the spot and leaning forward in his saddle, said: "Surrender, you d—d Yankee!" at the same time dealing me a blow that nearly severed the heel from my foot.

By this time I had gained an upright position in the saddle, and while this rebel cavalryman was trying his best to cripple me, and had succeeded in giving me another slight wound in my left arm by a sabre thrust, I managed to draw my sabre—my revolver being empty—and placed myself in an attitude of defence, just as my would-

be slayer put spurs to his horse and disappeared in the darkness.

And now hundreds of rebel cavalymen passed me, charging with a yell through the woods. I could not understand why my opponent left me so suddenly, unless he thought when I drew my sabre I was drawing a revolver, as it was quite dark at the time.

All of a sudden my horse became quiet, ceasing to rear, jump, and turn; and just as I began to cherish the hope of my possible escape, I felt a tremulous motion of the animal's body, and the terrible reality flashed upon me that my horse was shot. My equipment so encumbered me that before I could dismount, the wounded animal staggered and fell to the ground. So suddenly did he fall, that my wounded limb lay under him, and although the time seemed much longer, it was probably little more than an hour that I lay bound to the earth by the dead weight of a ten hundred pound horse. During the death-struggle of the poor animal I cherished a faint hope that he might change his position sufficiently to allow me to extricate myself from my painful position. Although each motion of the struggling animal caused me intense pain it was welcome compared with the terrible possibility

of remaining in that position for an indefinite time with no possible way of escape, coupled with the thought that I was slowly bleeding to death.

Again and again I cried for help, each time the echo of my voice in the surrounding wood seeming to mock me as it mingled with the victorious yell of the enemy. I say *victorious* as in all probability they would have considered it a victory had not a gun been fired, so long as the Union forces turned their backs upon the Confederate capital, that twenty-four hours before they had considered lying wholly at the mercy of the Union troops.

My horse had ceased its death-struggles, and his dead body was lying on my wounded leg; my knee was also badly injured by the fall.

## CHAPTER III.

Our soldiers had gone; no rebels in sight or hearing, and all was quiet except an occasional report of a musket, or the distant barking of a watch-dog, and this upon the same ground where all was strife and excitement so short a time before. The pain in my injured limb was terrible, and the perspiration streamed from my face during my unsuccessful attempts to regain my liberty.

With a small knife that I carried in my pocket I tried to cut away a part of the horse's body that bore so heavily upon my limb. But in this I failed, as my position—lying on my right side—prevented me from doing so. One more chance presented itself to view, and in this I was successful. With my hand I commenced digging the earth from under my wounded limb, and I can assure you dear reader that never did I labor under more painful and discouraging circumstances, than I did during the hour I worked for my life.

I had overcome one difficulty, although my prospects were anything but enlivening, when I found myself sitting beside my dead horse, my clothing wet through by

the snow and rain, badly wounded, and my finger-nails nearly torn from my hand by digging the roots and hard earth, from under my imprisoned limb. Alone, and in the enemy's land; and I thought, as many, many a young man had, when lying wounded upon the battle field, of what my almost broken hearted mother said, as she bade her seventeen year old boy good bye, when he so cheerfully and thoughtlessly entered upon the ever-changing scenes of war, "God bless and protect you, my boy; Oh how I shall see you in my dreams lying wounded upon the battle-field. Remember, my son, that should it thus be, you can not call upon your father and mother for help, but you can call upon your God."

All these thoughts came to my mind, and as I had already learned that "the inevitable strengthens courage," and that "necessity is the mother of invention," I went to work. With a large cotton handkerchief, and a part of my coat-lining, I dressed my wounded foot as well as I could under the circumstances, it being very dark, and the rain and snow falling fast. I tested my strength by lifting small stones, breaking sticks, etc., fearing I was growing weak from the loss of blood. Being satisfied that the flow of blood was subsiding, I prepared to leave

the place, as my body was being chilled through by the cold. I obtained a narrow piece of board from the wood that some of the boys had collected, and using it for a crutch, and a small stick for a cane, I hobbled away in the direction of—I knew not where. As I passed the little played-out pack-horse, I cut his halter, and as I saw the little shivering discarded animal stagger away in the darkness, I thought he would most likely fall into better hands than I should. I then passed out of the woods, and in the direction that our men had taken, crossing the ground where they had formed in line just previous to their departure. I entered another piece of woods, and here my strength partially gave out, and I lay down beside a large rock or boulder, thinking I would remain there till daylight. I remained in that place an hour or so, when my wet clothing began to freeze. The rain and snow had ceased to fall, and the weather was growing colder. I reasoned that to remain here would mean chilling to death, and to escape capture in the condition I was in, was impossible. I thus reflected upon my sad and painful condition, and having no cartridges for my carbine, I laid it beside the rock with my sabre, and covering them with dirt and leaves, left them. I moved on just

fast enough to keep from being chilled through, and was probably suffering more excruciating pain than I had ever suffered before, when a summons: "Halt! Who comes there?" was given a few rods in front, and I returned the usual answer, "A friend."

The question was then asked, "What regiment?" I quickly answered, "1st Vermont; of what regiment are you?" I asked, thinking the voice was that of a Northerner; "1st Alabama. Hold up your hands!" was the reply.

If I had possessed the use of my legs, I would have cared little for their challenge, but as it was, I was wholly at their mercy, and little of this did I, as a cavalry rider, expect at their hands.

We had of late heard much of the terrible suffering and death of our men who had fallen into the enemy's hands as prisoners of war.

Stooping down so as to bring my head nearer the ground, I could see outlined against the sky, the forms of mounted men deployed as skirmishers.

Again the order, "Hold up your hands and advance!" was given by one of the men before me, and at the same time the sharp report of a carbine in the hands of one of

the skirmishers, rang out upon the night air. "Cease firing," was the stern command of an officer in charge.

This order from one in authority, gave me momentary relief, as I believed when I heard that shot, that my time had come, and that they would shoot me on the spot; but I soon felt assured that it was through excitement that the shot was fired, for when I called out the name of my regiment, they did not know but that I might be one of the advance of an attacking party.

The second time I was ordered to hold up, I replied: "I am wounded, and will surrender, but I cannot hold up my hands, as I am leaning on a stick for support."

Knowing that escape was impossible, I stood for a few moments as if paralyzed before I could move, while panoramic scenes of sickness, starvation, and death, stood out in bold relief before me.

I advanced to within a few feet of the line, when two horsemen rode up, and wheeling their horses one on each side of me, ordered me to drop my sticks, and with each hand to grasp their saddles, and to hold on firmly. I obeyed the command, and they started their horses into a brisk trot. My wounded foot and knee had become so sore I could not bear my weight upon it, consequently I



relaxed my hold upon their saddles, and fell to the ground, whereupon one of my escorts kindly informed me that if I commenced any of my Yankee tricks he would proceed to make a lead-mine of my d—d Yankee body. Fearing he would carry out his cowardly threat, I exerted myself to the utmost, and although my sufferings were terrible, I regained my feet and then said: "You have the power to shoot a defenceless prisoner, but I trust you have no man in your army that would stoop to such barbarous and cruel work. At least, we have heard that you treated your prisoners of war kindly."

This bit of falsehood and flattery had the desired effect; at least upon one of them, for after I had explained to them that I was badly wounded, and weak from the loss of blood, but would do my best to walk, if the distance was not far and they would go slowly, he said: "My comrade won't hurt ye I reckon; he thought perhaps you uns was playin' off on us, and would try to get away."

As we resumed our march, they appeared to be more friendly, going so far as almost to warrant that I would not be hung, but would be used like other prisoners of war.

We moved slowly along for perhaps an eighth of a mile, and halted at an old blacksmith shop, where the two men dismounted, and one of them took me by the arm and led me inside. As the rebel soldier and I were seated upon a couple of nail kegs, at one end of the room, I saw several rebel officers gathered around a blazing fire in an old-fashioned fire-place, at the other end of this capacious, though dirty, apartment, earnestly engaged in conversation.

They did not seem to notice us, as we entered, and I soon became interested in their conversation, which would almost lead one, situated as I was, to believe he was the only survivor of the whole Union army. There were ten or twelve of these officers, most of them quite young, ranking from Second Lieutenant to Colonel, and all cavalry officers. As these young men warmed themselves and dried their clothing by the fire, each in turn related the many daring deeds he had performed, and how the black abolitionists had suffered at his hand.

While listening to this conversation, I heard an officer, whom I took to be a Colonel, say to the rest that he would give a good deal for a cup of hot coffee; whereupon, I made the proposition that if he would allow me to

sit up to the fire and warm myself, I would furnish him the coffee. As I spoke, they all turned to look at me, and one of them, who appeared to be the superior officer, said: "Aha, whom have we here? A Yank?"

The guard who sat by me, answering in the affirmative, the officer replied: "Certainly, certainly; sit right up here my man, and warm yourself."

As the guard assisted me to the fire, they made room for me, and one of them said:

"Well, Yank, have you been collecting up a little Confederate lead?"

I had two or three pounds of sugar and coffee mixed together in my haversack, and as I reached it to the man who had spoken about it, and told him to help himself, he took out a small amount, and handing it back to me said:

"Yank, you must not be too free with your coffee, for it may be a long time before you will get any more."

These men were gentlemanly appearing; they used me well, took nothing from me, and one gave me bandage, and offered to help dress my wound, but I concluded to let it remain as it was until morning, thinking I might obtain the assistance of the rebel doctors in Richmond. After I had thoroughly warmed myself, and had answered

the many questions which in a joking way they had asked me, such as, "What is old Abe doing now days?" "If you had taken Richmond, were you intending to reside there?" etc., etc., and after I had done my best to reply in the same vain and nonsensical manner, I was told that there was a horse at the door for me to ride, and that a couple of their soldiers would conduct me to where the rest of the prisoners were. Believing myself to be the only prisoner taken that night, I was somewhat surprised at this declaration, and turning to the commanding officer, I asked :

"Have you captured other prisoners, to-night?"

"Certainly, my Yankee friend," he laughingly replied, "you fellows are anxious to get into Richmond, so we are giving you all the assistance we can. Most of your raiding party is in camp, about a mile from here, and some of our Confederate soldiers are entertaining them, and in the early morning will conduct them into the city. There were a few who did not accept our invitation, that have returned."

These remarks were followed by a loud laugh from all. and wishing to give them a parting shot, I replied, as they assisted me to mount the horse :

"President Lincoln will chastise those fellows for returning before they looked over your city; consequently, you may look for their return in the near future, and their friends with them. Look out for them."

"Goodbye Yank, you will take Richmond in the morning; keep your courage up; and by this time, the two guards who went with me, and myself, were getting too far away to hear them, and I neither saw nor heard anything more of these men.

In a little clearing in the pine woods, we found about forty prisoners. Among them was the young negro of whom the Colonel had spoken, as being killed or captured, when the enemy first opened fire upon us that evening. There were about as many horses captured as there were men. The men were gathered around a blazing logheap, and about twenty-five or thirty guards (cavalrymen) were guarding them. Some of the guards were interesting themselves with the young negro, asking him all kinds of questions, and telling him how he would "pick cotton down in old Kentucky," during the coming season.

It was nearly daylight when we arrived there. A rebel Sergeant loaned me his blanket, and I got about an

hour's broken sleep before we started for Richmond. We were mounted upon the captured horses, and under a heavy guard, proceeded on our way towards the Rebel Capital. The distance being about eight miles, it was about 11 A. M. when we entered the city. Great excitement and consternation prevailed; the streets were thronged with men, women and children; the former eagerly discussing the probability of the total annihilation of the Confederate Capital, should the dreaded Yanks enter the city, while the later, in juvenile ecstasy, proclaimed to the anxious and fear-stricken pedestrians what terrible things they had heard and seen during the past forty-eight hours, and especially during the past ten or fifteen, while the Yankees were almost in the out-skirts of the city.

But as our dejected and tired little band, many of us besmeared with mud and blood, entered the city and marched down the street in single file, with a strong guard on either side, there looked to be more men than there really were, and instantly the fear, dread and anxiety of the people, who believed that nearly all of the Yankee raiders had been captured, gave way to joy, hilarity, and a desire for revenge.

The men who were with us as our guards, were old soldiers; they knew how to use a prisoner, and for this we were very thankful, for had our escorts been as blood-thirsty and revengeful as were the people who gathered around us in the streets of Richmond, and had there been nothing to oppose them, it is doubtful if there would have been a man left to tell the story.

They heaped upon us all the abuse and insults they were capable of doing. Objects were thrown from windows and doors in to the rank. Women would stand in their door-ways, and even on the side-walks, calling names and using insulting and profane language. Small boys who would shout the name of the Libby Hotel;

"Free carriage to the Libby Hotel! Right this way to the Libby!" was again and again shouted in our ears.

"Grace God, Captain, have you got the whole Yankee army?" cried one old lady, from a second-story window, to the Sergeant who had charge of the prisoners; while another said in a sneering and mocking way, "You blue-bellied Yankees, you have taken Richmond at last, haven't you?"

Such were the expressions of many of these people, as we waited for an hour or two outside of Castle Thun-

der, previous to our first introduction to the art of rebel cruelties.

We stopped but a few hours in Castle Thunder (an old slave pen), and then we moved to the Pemberton Building. This building was made of brick; it was three stories high, and I should think it was 75 or 100 feet long. It was formerly an old tobacco warehouse; the great iron tobacco presses stood as dark and silent sentinels, having witnessed the transformation of hundreds of brave Union soldiers from physical perfection to tottering and emaciated forms.

Here we were installed for an indefinite time upon the second floor. I failed to mention that when I came up to the rest of the prisoners that morning, I found two of my own company—Milo Farnsworth and Frank B. Jocelyn. These men assisted me into the building and up the stairs; here we were all ordered into one end of the room. A stand and a few chairs were brought and placed about the middle of the apartment. Three or four officers came in and seated themselves by the stand, and one man at a time was called up and searched, and passed on to the other end of the room. In this way they could get nearly all we had, as we were unable to help each other. Our



money, watches, knives and overcoats and boots (if good) were taken from us. I had \$8.00 in silver and five dollars in greenbacks in a leather belt that I wore around my body, also a twenty dollar greenback note which I had in my mouth when I was searched. Finding the five dollar bill and the sixteen silver half-dollars (that I bought in Canada two weeks before), they appeared to be well pleased and searched me no further.

As each man was searched he was asked to what command he belonged. Now, as I was in Col. Dahlgren's command the first two days of the raid, or until his death, and thinking that perhaps they knew nothing about him and his military career, and that they would not look upon me with such hatred as they would those who were under Kilpatrick, whom they feared and disliked, I replied that I was with Col. Dahlgren.

Although this was the truth, I made a great mistake, when I mentioned his name, as I soon found out that some of the Confederates had met him before, and that his prowess as a dashing cavalry raider had not met with their approbation. This was conspicuously apparent in every word, act and look of these men, especially in those of the dreaded Dick Turner, who was in command at the

time. His fiendish countenance lightened up with a glow of unmistakable satisfaction, as with a terrible oath he ordered me to step one side, and remain there till they got through. My wounded foot and knee had become so sore I could not bear any part of my weight upon it, and with but a single crutch that one of the old prisoners gave me, and which was too short for me, it was with difficulty I moved around.

## CHAPTER IV.

For about an hour I was kept standing or sitting at one side of the room, before they finished what they called "examination," but which we called "robbery." During that time five others took their places beside me, and all as ignorant of why they were separated from their comrades, as I was myself. These men belonged to two or three different regiments, and by inquiry, I found that they had all belonged to Dahlgren's command.

Now, were we to be treated better than the rest of the captured, or were we to be hanged? This was the question we asked each other, and which was yet to be solved. We were told not to mingle with the rest of the prisoners, but to keep by ourselves, at one end of the room. We reasoned that the object in doing this, was simply so that they could find us readily and not be obliged to have the men fall into line in order to find the same men again. Soon, others prisoners were put into the room, and we had a hundred and fifty men on the floor.

When Dick Turner came around and stood looking us over, one of the boys ventured to ask him why we were

separated from the others, he replied that the rest of the d—d Yankee cut-throats were not going to be hanged just yet.

Although the rest of the prisoners were informed that Dahlgren's men were to be executed, we paid but little attention to the report, and looked upon it as a revengeful threat, until the following day, when we were informed by an item in the Richmond papers, that a notorious character by the name of Dahlgren, who commanded a gang of Yankee cut-throats and murderers, had been shot, and that six of his desperadoes, who, for the last three days had been amusing themselves by burning buildings and murdering defenceless women and children, had been captured. When Dick Turner made his rounds the following morning, swearing at, and kicking any sick or lame prisoner who chanced to be in his way, I asked him if he would furnish me with a pair of crutches. The words were scarcely out of my mouth, when with a fearful oath he growled, "No, you will be in h—l with your commanding officer before you will have a chance to use them."

The weather was quite cool on the 3rd, and the old prisoners begged of the guards and non-commissioned

officers, to bring them up some wood. The new prisoners knew that it would be useless to ask, but finally a colored man brought up an armful of wood and threw it down upon the floor. One of the new prisoners stood near, and as the negro threw it down, the soldier slapped him on the back, and said, "Bully for you, uncle."

He had no sooner said the words, than a rebel Sergeant whom the prisoners called the "kicking Sergeant," dealt the young man a blow in the face that felled him to the floor. This brutal act not seeming to satisfy the ruffian, he kicked him several times, saying, "I will learn you to make friends with a d—d nigger."

One of the old prisoners gave me a pair of crutches, but I could find no doctor to dress my wounds.

The morning of the fourth, I saw another notice in the Richmond, daily, "Inquirer," I think the paper was called, that the six Yankee outlaws would be hanged; there was no hope for them, as they had confessed that they were with Dahlgren, no trial would be given them. The paper went on to say: "If Beast Butler should swing when we do get him, why shouldn't these murderers, who have been taken red-handed in their brutal work, swing, now that we have got them?"

One or two of these men who were receiving such marked attention, seemed to worry a good deal about it, while others made light of it. Speaking for myself, I will say that I had not an atom of fear that the rebel military authorities would carry out their cowardly threat; but I was in constant fear that their false reports would so agitate and excite the people who had already nerved themselves up to a state bordering upon insanity, that they would be ready and willing participants in any act of violence the military officials in their imaginary greatness might suggest. Therefore, I did not feel that we were safe for a moment. Any unusual noise among the soldiers, or upon the streets, and I would hasten to write a few words in my diary, thinking perhaps they would be my last.

It was during the fourth day of our captivity that I said to my comrades in suspense:

"Boys, I for one, propose to lie no longer like a sheep before his shearer, and say not a word in our own defence, and not even deny this false accusation they bring against us; therefore I shall ask Lieut. Turner to hear me, when he comes around again."

"Don't stand in front of me when you speak to him, for he will open pan upon you instantly," was the laughing remark of one.

"You had better wait till just before we are hanged," said another poor fellow, whom we afterward heard was shot for retaliation.

We had not finished our conversation upon the subject, when we saw Turner coming toward us. As he came near, I arose to my feet, and saluting him, said: "Lieutenant, may I speak to you a few minutes?"

"I don't care a d—n who you speak to," was the response; but as he did not move away, thinking perhaps that I might say something to convict ourselves, I hastened to make the following appeal to him:

"Lieutenant Turner, you have us in your power, and our lives are in your hands. You say we are cut-throats and murderers, that we have murdered innocent women and children, and must now pay the penalty with our lives. I speak for my comrades here, as well as for myself. We have committed no crime. We have done our duty as soldiers and nothing more. I never saw Col. Dahlgren till we started on this raid. He had four hundred men in his command, and they all belonged to dif-

ferent regiments. When we started, he said to us, 'Men, my command is small, and I want every man to keep his place. Don't leave the ranks, or go into any house. Do not molest any private property, or speak to any man, woman or child along the route. I want you strictly to obey these orders, and any man doing otherwise will be punished severely.' We obeyed these orders to the letter, and when Col. Dahlgren was killed, his command became separated and part of them joined the main column under General Kilpatrick the following day. These men and myself were among that number, and were taken prisoners that night. If we are to be shot down like dogs, or lose our lives by an infuriated, misinformed mob, and that for coming into your lines, or on to your territory on a cavalry raid, then every one of your men who came into Maryland and Pennsylvania eight months ago and participated in the battle of Gettysburg, Pa., and fell into our hands as prisoners of war, should fare the same fate. Thousands of Union men lost their lives by Gen. Lee's raid into Pennsylvania, and I have not heard, thus far, that one Confederate soldier has lost his life by this raid."

By this time Turner was moving away, and I never heard whether my little speech did good or harm.



Just before dark that night, all the raiders were moved across the way to the Libby, there we remained till the following day about three o'clock, and we were then removed to Belle Island, which is in the James river, nearly opposite the city. The Island comprises about nine acres, and three acres are surrounded by a breastwork some three feet in height.

This piece of ground was covered with old, dirty, Sybley tents, nearly as black as smoke and dirt could make them. They were crowded with prisoners who had been confined here and in other prisons from one to eighteen months. Here I met with three or four of my own company; among them was George Hull, who lived neighbour to me in Fairfield, Vt., and was my tent-mate at the time of his capture at Brandy Station, October 11th, 1863. The sight of these starved, sick, dirty and emaciated human beings was enough to dishearten the bravest of the brave. Here, men who but a few months before, had possessed health, strength, courage and all things else that go to make the true American soldier, were now seen staggering from their filthy quarters, covered with rags and vermin. As we entered the camp my five comrades and I were told to occupy one of the old

ragged tents at one end of the camp, and not to mix with the rest of the prisoners, saying it would go hard with us if we were found in some other part when they called for us. We had nearly made up our minds that these threats were for punishment, and that there was not so much danger of mob law as there was while we were in the city. We reasoned that they would heap upon us all the abuse and indignity they could, and still keep themselves within the bounds of civilized warfare. They dare not kill us, but as we were raiders and had caused them to suffer, they proposed to retaliate in every way possible, and make it just as uncomfortable for us as they were able. We cared but little for their orders to remain in our tents, and no sooner were their backs turned, than we were searching for acquaintances among the dejected looking throng that rebel cruelty had made almost unrecognizable. My friend Hull, who enlisted at the same time and in the same company that I did, at once began telling me of what he had heard in regard to the six men who were in Dahlgren's detachment and were going to be hanged or shot. He said:

“Now do you know who these men are, and why they were selected from Dahlgren's command?” I

answered his last question first, and when later I informed him that I was one of the unfortunate men, I well knew that I had one sympathetic and true friend in this, the hour of need, for he immediately began planning some mode of escape. He informed me that the following day four hundred prisoners were going to leave the Island. Their destination was unknown to all, except the officers in command. He said that two days before our arrival a man by the name of Sybley had died, and they had not reported his death as they were drawing his rations. This dead man was a New York soldier and belonged to the same mess that my friend Hull belonged to, also to the same four hundred that were going away.

"Now," says he, "if the Johnnies do not find this out before we leave the city, we can disguise you as an old prisoner, and you can answer to the name of Sybley and get away either to another prison or home." This being our decision, we at once arranged for my disguise.

This very important part of the arrangement was made by Comrade Hull, assisted by one or two others who belonged to the same hundred, and were among those to leave the Island the following day. As I have before mentioned, all my clothing had been taken from me ex-

cept my pants and shirt, and an old, tunnel-shaped, coarse wool hat that a sympathetic Johnny had given me in exchange for a four dollar hat, that he assured me was his exact fit. He also assured me that the one he had given me in exchange was not silk, although it was changeable, he having worn it first one side out and then the other, for the past four years. I cannot say I was very well pleased with the trade, that I had no hand in making, but was better satisfied when I saw the intrinsic value of the old hat in forming a part of my disguise.

The following morning one of my shirt sleeves was torn off at the elbow, my bare arms and face were well besmeared with coal-dust, my long hair combed down straight under my secession hat, and with a small piece of an old dirty army blanket covering my shoulders, the boys acknowledged me all that went to make up the Union prisoner, except the tottering step and emaciated form. When all had been satisfactorily arranged, I anxiously awaited our departure, hardly caring what might be our destination, could I but escape the doom that seemed to await me.

At the dawn of day the men were up and astir, especially the six hundred who were to leave the Island. All

kinds of rumors were afloat; some thought we were going to City Point, Va., to be exchanged, while others expressed their belief that we were to go to another prison. All our conceptions, however, suddenly ended when the voice of the dreaded Dick Turner was heard, as he passed through the camp, ordering the men to get into line and march out of the gate, and form on the outside. At a narrow gateway in the breastwork that surrounded the camp, Dick Turner was stationed, eagerly watching the men as they filed by him, and sorrow to him who was caught "flanking," as they called it, where a man tried to pass out with a squad to which he did not belong.

During nearly three years of my service, I had encountered many hardships and narrow escapes, and only a few days previous to this while wounded, I lay bound to the earth by the weight of a dead horse for nearly an hour; but in all the thrilling experiences through which it had been my lot to pass, none could compare with the indescribable and hopeless feeling that took possession of me as I glanced at the hardened, heartless wretch before me, and realized how my life hung by a thread, as it were, which he would quickly sever should he pene-

trate my disguise. As we passed through the gate, I recognized a man in front of me as a Sergeant belonging to the 5th New York Cavalry—a raider who was captured at the same time as myself, though not one of Dahlgren's men. He was attempting a "flank" movement, having foolishly conceived the idea that he might possibly pass the guard unobserved, and did not harbor the thought that should the attempt prove a failure, he would be brutally assaulted. But such proved to be the case, for as Turner recognized him as a new prisoner, he instantly caught a musket from the hands of one of the guards, and, clubbing the weapon, he felled the Sergeant to the ground. Not being satisfied with this, he thrust the point of the bayonet into the fellow's thigh, and with a terrible oath, kicked him several times as he crawled back inside the gate upon his hands and knees.

If this man received such inhuman treatment for a trifling offense, I reasoned that nothing but my life would satisfy Turner should I be detected in this my feeble effort to escape the awful punishment that confronted me. What a weight was lifted as I passed this man unobserved. What a bright spot suddenly shone upon the dark cloud that hung over me as the Sergeant who

counted the men turned to the commanding officer and said, "Just six hundred, sir."

I felt that meant everything to me; for had there been one more than the number required, a search would have been made, and the chances were that it would have been found out that one of Dahlgren's men was missing.

I promptly answered to the name of Sibley at roll-call, and thus far, all went as well as could have been expected.

## CHAPTER V.

After the prisoners had been formed in two ranks, counted, and the roll called, Dick Turner stepped in front, and made the following remarks:

"Yanks, last night my dog was killed by some of you uns in this ere crowd. I want to know who killed him, and I'll be d—d if I don't find out if it takes me a month. So now, you uns jest trot out the sneak that did it, and you're all right; and if you don't I'll chuck the whole of you back into that camp, and you'll go just seven days without rations. Do you hear?"

And he brought down a heavy club upon a barrel-head that stood near, as if to strike terror to the hearts of his forlorn and dejected hearers.

I whispered to my comrade, "Can it be that after passing through all right thus far, I am now to meet with adversity, perhaps lose my life?"

As I spoke, a young man standing near me stepped to the front, and taking off his hat, saluted the Lieutenant, saying, "I am the man that killed your dog, sir."



Every eye was turned towards the two men, and every man expected to see Dick Turner add another to his list of murders; and possibly he might have done so had he not been stopped by a superior officer before completing his cruel work. When told by the brave boy—who looked to be not more than sixteen years of age—that he was the only person concerned in the killing of the dog, and knowing as he must, that the confession was made to save the brave young man's comrades from extra suffering, Turner, had he possessed a heart, or anything pertaining to honor, would have forgiven the trifling offense. But forgiveness was something Dick Turner could not expect from either God or man, then why ask it of him? Walking up to the boy, he said:

"Was you the wretch that killed my dog last night?"

"I was, sir," came the prompt reply.

"And what did you kill him for?"

"For food," answered the young artilleryman, not taking his eyes from the face of the villian who stood before him.

"Then you eat dog meat, do you?"

"I do when I am hungry enough, and can get it," was the reply.

Turner then asked the fellow if he had any of the meat in his haversack; designating a small dirty cotton bag that hung from his shoulder.

The boy took a piece of the meat from the sack, and held it up before the heartless man, who should have blushed with shame, but instead he in a sneering tone said :

“You Yankee beauty, if you eat dog meat, eat a mouthful of that as it is.”

The poor fellow, not daring to refuse, took a piece of the raw meat in his mouth, whereupon the wretch struck him across the face with the side of his sword, saying :

“It suits you too well; come with me, you d—d Yankee dog-killer.”

Near the gates there had been constructed an implement of torture called the “Jack.” This consisted of two posts driven into the ground some six or eight feet apart; a plank was pinned or spiked to the side of these posts, about three feet from the ground. The prisoner was placed astride this plank, with his feet tied together underneath. His arms were pinioned and a stick of wood nearly the size of a railroad tie was placed between his legs, thus stretching the limbs and preventing the sufferer

from falling from the edge of the plank. I think it was from five to ten minutes that the boy endured the suffering before the excruciating pain overcome him, and he fainted. In about fifteen minutes he revived, and at the same time fortune favored him, as one of Turner's superior officers appeared on the scene. This officer—a Major I think—came to take the prisoners from the Island to the Libby, and as he was in a hurry, he ordered the boy to be taken from the “Jack” and placed back in the ranks. Lieutenant Turner protested, saying he had only had him there five minutes, but the commanding officer was obeyed, although it caused disappointment to him who had doted on seeing one more emaciated form writhe in agony to gratify his hellish desires.

As the young man was released he was assisted back into the ranks and soon after, as he was moving along, leaning on a comrade for support, he said, “I got out of that pretty well, didn't I, boys?”

I felt like expressing my opinion in the same words, but as my case was of a more serious character, and as yet I was far from being out of danger, I concluded to be as discreet as possible, speak only when spoken to and not subject myself to any unnecessary inspection.

We were soon treading the floors of the notorious Libby, that was as familiar to many of the six hundred as their own firesides; while others who, when captured, were taken direct from the scene of action to Belle Island, had never been introduced to the managers of that institution; even the mere mention of its name aroused a feeling of horror and despair in the hearts of thousands whose loved ones were slowly but surely dying from the cruel treatment they were subjected to.

At the time of which I write,—March, 1864,—Libby prison was the most notorious place where Union prisoners were confined. Belle Island was second; and the name and history of both will be handed down from generation to generation. But little did the good and loyal people of the North think while reading of the barbarous cruelty perpetrated in Libby upon their brave and beloved defenders of the Union, that nearly completed was another den of horrors—Andersonville—whose history was to startle and shock the world; whose inaugurators could truthfully boast that they had slain thirteen thousand brave, noble and patriotic Union soldiers within its walls. That cruelty, starvation and exposure in the

prison pen was by far more effective than shot and shell.

Here, for thirty-six hours, the six hundred prisoners occupied the second floor of this historic structure, while waiting the change that would add to the cup of sorrow that many had drained to its bitter dregs. The pain that I endured was terrible, but I dared not complain or ask for medical attendance, for fear of detection. Health and youth were in my favor, and could I but escape the ignominious death that I feared awaited me, should I remain in Richmond, I believed I could endure pain without a murmur. So long as I remained there I was in constant danger of being missed from the raiders left on the Island; and the next morning as I saw Dick Turner standing at the head of the stairs, looking over the prisoners, I believed my doom was sealed. I instantly commenced giving a message to Comrade Hull to be conveyed to my friends at home, should he live to reach them, when to my overwhelming joy, I saw Turner retrace his steps after making some inquiry not relating to Dahlgren's raiders or the men who accompanied him.

With the bare floor for a bed, without blankets, and in cold March weather, our situation was not a desirable one for the thirty-six hours we remained in Libby, pre-

vious to our one thousand miles' ride to Andersonville. The second night, about twelve or one o'clock, I heard the voices of men on the floor beneath the one we occupied, and spoke to my comrade, who had fallen asleep, telling him that something unusual was going on among the guards, and that I feared my escape from the Island had been discovered. The anxiety I felt in regard to my perilous situation, together with the suffering from my injured limb, prevented me from enjoying either rest or sleep, before exhaustion came to the rescue. Any act varying from the usual course would naturally excite my suspicion, therefore sleep was out of the question until I had turned my back upon those who had so unjustly said that I should die. Comrade Hull said it was more likely we were going to move, which proved to be the case, for in a few moments five or six rebels—among them the dreaded Dick Turner—walked through the room, kicking those who were sleeping, and with each kick uttering an oath, and names that propriety forbids inserting in these pages.

“Up and get into line! Fall in! Fall into line, you d—d Yankee nigger worshippers!”

Such were the names and abusive language we heard, and which only the most ignorant and unprincipled person will ever use.

The men were not long in getting into line, forming two ranks on each side of the room and through the center. The roll was then called, the men counted, and the order given, "Forward march!"

As we passed out of the door at the main entrance, a loaf of corn-bread called a "pone," or "dodger," weighing about two pounds, was given to each man. Most likely this was the first, and probably the only instance where the issuing of food to Union prisoners, caused a feeling of sorrow and despair among those who would afterwards so ravenously grasp the unpalatable mixture. But they knew that if they were going to be paroled or exchanged, they would not receive these rations, which the rebels considered sufficient for three days, as the next day they would be in their own lines. Then again, they would not care to have the bill of fare at the Libby hotel known to the people of the North, more than was actually necessary. Had these prisoners been destined for City Point, or any contiguous place of exchange, six hundred Confederate corn dodgers would in a few days have been

on exhibition in six hundred Northern homes. Well the Johnnies knew it, and well we knew by the size of the dodger, that the distance was great, and that another prison pen inevitably awaited our arrival.

A picture of that midnight march would be fondly cherished at the present day by the surviving participants. Slowly the dejected looking crew wended its way through the dark and deserted streets of the rebel city, while its people quietly reposed in the cradle of secession. What a change in the appearance of these youthful heroes. What a change a few short months had made in their mental and physical condition. What an effect calculating barbarity has had upon them. Yes! The ghastly faces are vividly portrayed by the light of a street lamp. The tottering steps of those who are not assisted by comrades, or leaning upon crutches and canes for support, is indisputable evidence of the cruelty to which they have been subjected. Silently these skeleton forms advance. The solitude of the night is broken only by the sentry, as he walks to and fro on his beat.

But hark! The shrill whistle of a railroad locomotive now breaks upon our ears. The guards who walk on each side of this forlorn and shivering column, urge



them on, and soon the line is formed beside the waiting train of box cars, that stands ready to convey its load of human freight to that den of horrors, which at that date was known only to the demons of Hell, and the Southern Confederacy.

The six hundred prisoners were soon packed into ten freight cars, each commodious apartment receiving sixty men. After deducting room for a water barrel, there was a little over four square feet to each man, or two feet square. This may appear to the reader sufficient room for those whom I have previously described. Therefore, I must ask him to bear in mind that our mode of living did not materially change our height. It was the breadth and thickness of the boys that caused one of the rebel officers to remark, when a protest was made against crowding sixty men into one box car, "You can pack as many Yanks into a car as you can clapboards."

To protest against any wrong, to ask for food, medicine, clothing, wood, or anything essential to our comfort more than they were actually obliged to give to prevent immediate death, was refused with such evident delight, that we soon learned to ask them for nothing, and

murmur as little as possible, so that our enemies were then less delighted.

About three o'clock in the morning of March 9th, 1864, the engineer and his firemen,—a slave,—stepped on their engine that was to draw ten freight cars loaded with six hundred prisoners, and one passenger car, carrying about forty officers and guards, and pulled out from the Richmond depot.

“How are you, City Point?”

“How are you going home?”

“What do you think of the parole?”

And all such remarks were made by those whose heart and courage had not entirely failed them, as we were being conveyed from the loathsome dens of Richmond, to a place as yet unknown to us. Indeed, we were as ignorant of our destination as were the cattle which a few days previously were conveyed to the slaughter in the same cars that now transported brave Union soldiers to a more terrible doom.

The reader may consider this hardly credible, in this, our civilized country; but the patriotic hearts still beat in the bosoms of many of the survivors who passed

through that terrible ordeal, and who will vouch for its truthfulness.

Only once, during a ride of nine hundred miles, occupying nearly five days and nights, were we allowed to step on the ground. The third day about two o'clock in the afternoon, our train halted for one hour at or near a small station in South Carolina, on the R—— D—— railroad. The guards were thrown out, encircling about one-half acre of nice level ground covered with grass and a few scattering trees. Here we were allowed to leave the cars and rest our tired limbs, that had remained in such a cramped condition for the past sixty hours, that many had become so paralyzed that they had to be assisted from the cars to the ground, and back again, at the expiration of the hour that seemed to pass with the rapidity of thought.

The small amount of corn-bread given us when leaving Richmond was by this time all gone, and some, whose appetites were more uncontrollable than others, had been fasting for the past twenty-four hours, having eaten their allowance during the first day and a half or two days, then trusting in fortune for the next. But thus far fortune had not favored them, excepting through the in-

strumentality of others whose physical condition prevented them from partaking of such coarse food. Therefore, it was freely given to those who had thus far been blessed with a degree of health that would enable them to subsist upon what their more unfortunate comrades could partake only in sufficient quantity to sustain life.

As for myself, I was so rejoiced over my escape from Belle Island, that, thus far, I had not given my physical condition due consideration; neither had my comrade, who had given me all the assistance he possibly could during our journey. But as the distance between us and our tyrannical keepers at Libby and Belle Island became greater I began more fully to comprehend the true character of my condition.

By this time my wounded limb had become badly swollen—the limited space allotted each person in the car causing many raps and bruises to the wound it would not otherwise have received. Then I realized full well that our condition would not be materially benefited by the transfer from one prison to another, and that a wounded man's prospects of recovery in such a place are not of an encouraging nature.

After we had again been packed into the car, I was seated in one corner with my wounded leg—which had been bathed in cold water—slung up on the side of the car in a piece of an old army blanket, and I did not suffer so badly, sleeping that night quite well. At this place, when the men were taken from the cars, we expected that rations of some kind would be issued to us before the train again moved on. But what was our dismay when two or three men advanced with baskets filled with what we supposed to be some kind of bread, but as they came alongside, they emptied the baskets, filled with ears of raw corn, on the car floor saying:

“Yanks, this is the best we can do for you now; you may eat it or throw it out. We can get nothing else here, it is impossible.”

As this explanation was given, a murmur ran through the car, mingled with hisses and groans, not entirely free from profanity.

We came from Richmond to Danville, Va., on the Piedmont Air Line, thence to Americus, Ga., via Atlanta, and Macon. The guards who came with us from Richmond appeared to be decent kind of men. They had

served in the field and at the front, therefore they did not attempt to obtain an honorable war record by brutally treating their prisoners of war. During the day, all the guards rode on top of the cars, and at night they were divided into reliefs, one man being posted inside each car at the door, and one on top. Two of the prisoners were shot by the guards, while trying to make their escape by jumping from the cars while in motion. The car door was left open during the day, the guard sitting or standing in the doorway. Just at dark the door was nearly closed, leaving a space two or three inches wide, and at this narrow opening the guard took up his station, thus shutting out any light that might shine, and any chance of escape until the door was again opened. Just as the shades of night were falling on the eve of the second day of our journey, when the train was running at some eighteen or twenty miles an hour, and just previous to the doors being closed for the night, two New York soldiers jumped from the car door to the ground, and made for the field. One was shot while climbing the railroad fence, and the other just after reaching the field. These men escaped from the forward part of the train, thus exposing themselves to the fire all along the train.

The train stopped for a few minutes and some slaves near by were ordered to bury the dead prisoners. We learned from the friends of the murdered men that they told their comrades previous to their leap for liberty that they did not much expect to escape, but had rather die in the attempt than longer undergo the pangs of hunger and other suffering to which they were subjected.

This happened soon after we crossed the South Carolina State Line, and before crossing the State two more attempts at freedom were made. One proved fatal, the poor fellow, who belonged to the 5th Michigan Cavalry, being shot dead as soon as he touched the ground; while the other, as he jumped, instantly rolled himself under the side of the car, lying as near the rail as possible, so as not to be hit by the running gear of the cars, and remained in this position until the cars had passed over him. Therefore, one out of four escaped, either to meet death in some other form or to reach our lines; the writer never knew which fate befell him. One of the guards was accidentally shot while standing at his post, resting the butt of his gun on the threshold of the car door. The weapon slipped from his hand, the hammer came in contact with the iron that supported the door, the gun was discharged,

the ball entered the man's head under the chin, and, passing up through his head, killed him instantly. The train was stopped, and the commanding officer and many of his men gathered around, and in the car, accusing the prisoners of murdering the guard. But upon close examination they were convinced of the truthfulness of our statement; though had it not been for the hole in the roof of the car, showing the direction of the ball, and that the gun could not have been in the hands of another when fired, I can not but believe that the result of the accident would have proved anything but agreeable to the occupants of that car.

At Atlanta a small amount of food was given to the prisoners. A little corn bread and a few hard-tack were given to a Sergeant, or one acting Sergeant, in each car, on the fourth day of our journey, and fifteen hours previous to our arrival at Andersonville. The food—about sufficient to appease the hunger of ten men—was equally divided among the fifty-seven men in our car, three men having died on the way; and probably the same amount of food was issued to the rest.



## CHAPTER VI.

On the 14th of March, about two o'clock in the afternoon, our train halted for the last time on that long to be remembered ride, at a small station in Sumter County, Georgia, about sixty-five miles southeast of Macon, fifty from the Alabama State Line, and one mile from that prison whose history has startled and shocked the world with a tale of woe, death and sorrow before unheard of and unknown to civilization.

From the cars—after being counted like cattle—we were marched to the gates of the prison, and there subjected to the taunts and jeers of those who were too ignorant to realize the shame, disgrace and brutality of striking a fallen foe.

He was not a "wolf in sheep's clothing," but a brute in Reb's clothing, was the little, swearing, swaggering hump-backed Captain, who divided the six hundred prisoners into nineties. Before opening the gate for us to pass into that den of horrors, from which so many were never to return alive, he gave us thoroughly to understand that should we attempt an escape, we would meet with

instant death; and to emphasize his cowardly threat, he shook his revolver in our faces. The stockade had been completed only a few days, therefore we would not want for wood for some time, as there were many pine stumps and limbs, together with the chips hewn from the logs used in the construction of the stockade, which enclosed about fifteen acres of ground. The large pine logs were hewn on four sides, and were twenty-five feet in length. A ditch was dug around the fifteen acres; the logs, or hewn timbers were placed on end in an upright position in this ditch, and the earth tamped around them, thus making a substantial wall twenty feet high, and running down into the ground five feet. The camp was a rectangle, being a little longer from east to west than from north to south. It was situated on two hill-sides, about equally divided by a small, sluggish brook running through the centre of the camp from west to east. Along this brook was a swamp, occupying about four or five acres.

I think there were only about six hundred in the prison when we arrived. They were scattered all over the camp. Our six stopped on the south side. The nineties were divided into messes containing fifteen men, and a sergeant was appointed to take charge of each ninety.

Then, when we drew our beef or bacon—which was but very few times—it was drawn for the battalion—four nineties—a sergeant of each ninety drawing for his own. The ninety rations were then divided into six parts, and the sergeant of a mess drew his share for the fifteen. The sergeant—as such he was called, whether sergeant, corporal or private—would cut the meat into fifteen pieces, generally consisting of about two ounces each, and while all were gathered around the small amount of tainted beef or bacon, one man would turn his back, and the sergeant, kneeling by the precious mite, would lay his knife on a piece, and say to the man whose back was turned :

“Who has this?”

The answer would come,

“No. 9.”

“Who has this?”

“No. 11.”

“Who has this?”

“No. 3.”

And so on, till all the fifteen pieces were given out. By dividing our rations in this manner, no one could say there was any partiality shown in the division. The corn meal was divided differently; the amount being generally

drawn on a rubber blanket and the sergeant measuring out a pint to each man, calling the numbers from one to fifteen. One of these cups held one or two spoonfuls more than a pint. After each man drew his cup full, if there was a little left, the sergeant would divide it with a spoon.

We had been inside an hour or more, when a mule team was driven into the south gate with rations of corn meal for the camp. As No. 3—my number—was called, I said to those standing about the mess:

“What will I do? I have nothing to draw my meal in.”

Whereupon, a fellow standing by my side, caught my Crimea hat from my head, and, holding it before my eyes, exclaimed:

“You are green. What’s the matter with that meal-sack?”

I had not thought of my hat before, but as the sergeant cried out, “Hurrah there, No. 3, or you will lose your meal,” I stepped forward and took my twenty-four hours’ rations in the old hat. Some one said to me soon after, as I stood leaning upon my crutches, thinking what was best to do next:

“Chum, if you have no way to cook your grub, and are going to throw it away, I’ll take it and cook it to the halves.” But being too hungry to accept this generous offer, I made my way to the brook, and with my hand dipped a sufficient quantity of water into the hat to make the meal into a sort of dough. I then put it upon a large pine chip and placed it near the fire, cooking it well upon one side, then carefully took it from the chip, and propping it up with the raw side to the heat, I soon had my dinner, supper and breakfast; it being my only food for twenty-four hours. I speak of this, as it was my first meal in Andersonville.

As I had been robbed in Richmond of all I possessed except the twenty dollar note, I was pretty destitute. My first move toward procuring cooking utensils was to find some one who could change my money. I was warned by Comrade Hull not to exhibit it more than was absolutely necessary, as some of these fellows had become financially embarrassed to such an extent that they would consider it no sin to appropriate my mite to their own special use. But in a day or two I found a fellow who had made quite a little sum in the Pemberton, at Richmond, and he gave me a ten and two fives for my twenty dollar

note. I soon found another who, in some mysterious manner had become the possessor of two old oyster cans and a canteen. The cans held about three half-pints each. I gave him a ten dollar note for one of the cans and five dollars for half the canteen. The latter had been thrown into the fire, and unsoldered, thus making two very good baking dishes, each piece being shaped something like a tea-saucer, only larger. Comrade Hull was the owner of about two-thirds of an old army blanket, and this constituted the whole of his worldly effects. It was well worn, but upon stretching it upon four sticks it would in a measure protect us from the sun, though not from the rain. Hull and myself tented together, sharing equally the little it was our good fortune to possess. When I found him he had no way of cooking his food, excepting as he borrowed from others the simple substitutes for cooking utensils they might possess; and then not until after the owner had used them, and often others who might have spoken for them before himself. But now we were pretty well provided for, and the main part of our daily labor was to look after our cooking utensils, to see that they were not burned, stolen or injured in any way by those to whom we loaned them.

The latter part of March was cold and rainy, and to add to my seemingly unendurable suffering, I was attacked by rheumatism, and for three or four weeks I suffered more than I have the power to tell.

Thirteen Vermont boys camped near the south gate. We occupied a small piece of ground not more than thirty feet square, and during the summer we dug a well twenty-three feet on that piece of ground and found good water. Among the thirteen there were eight from my own company—two of them, Milo Farnsworth and Frank B. Jocelyn, of Company B, my regiment—were captured the same night I was.

During the months of March and April many old prisoners came in from Libby, Belle Island, Danville and Salisbury. They were ragged, dirty and starved. As I stood by the gate, and saw these poor, forlorn looking creatures limp and stagger through the gate, and into another pen, where, if possible, they were to receive worse treatment than they had in the vile dens where they had passed the winter, and saw their glassy eyes dilate at the horrors surrounding them, I said to a comrade at my side: "Poor fellows! May God help them. If we stay here long, scarcely a man will be left to tell the story."

It was hard enough for men taken fresh from the field, and confined in such a terrible place, but for those who had endured the cold and hunger during the long winter, with no bed but a hard floor, many of them suffering from unhealed wounds, there was little chance that they could bear up under such cruelties as the Confederate Government found itself capable of inflicting.

My wounded foot grew better as the warm weather came, my rheumatism left me, and although I was very lame during the whole summer, I was better off than many of my comrades. I felt so thankful for my escape from Richmond, and the ignominious death that awaited me there, that the pangs of hunger, combined with the suffocating stench that pervaded the atmosphere at Andersonville seemed as trifles as compared with what I had escaped. During the heat of the day many of the boys would lie along in the shade of the stockade. As the old prisoners from Libby, Belle Island and other places of confinement had no tents, of course it was an atom of comfort to be allowed the shadow of the prison wall as a momentary protection from the burning rays of the southern sun. But no, this was not long to be enjoyed. The rebels went to work and built a "Dead Line." This con-



sisted of light pickets, driven into the ground six feet apart, and on top of these pickets boards two inches high and one inch thick were nailed, making a railing about two feet high, 20 feet from the stockade. This was the "Dead Line" that has been talked of by millions of people; and many a poor soldier met his death at that fatal line. I have seen a man shot to death by the heartless wretch who was standing guard at the top of the wall, for reaching a hand under the line to procure a chip of wood to cook his corn-meal; and I have seen others shot for reaching a hand under the line to fill their cups with water. One fellow who had lost a leg, and had suffered until life became a burden, deliberately stepped over the line, and, seating himself upon the ground, lay his crutches by his side, and folding his arms, was shot to death by the wretch who was only too willing to do the horrible work. Standing in the immediate vicinity, I closed my eyes a moment upon the cold-blooded murder, and all was over. The poor cripple, who could never have borne arms again, was shot to death and his murderer, we are told, received a furlough for his bravery. Hundreds of Union prisoners were eye-witnesses to this piece of brutality; and any ex-Union prisoners who may chance to peruse these pages, will at once be

reminded of the one-legged man, familiarly known as "Pretty Poll," on account of his Roman nose. Each morning men were detailed to go over the camp, and bring the dead to the south gate. There they were laid along in rows, and in the afternoon they were loaded into an army wagon, and drawn away to the burying ground, where a few Union prisoners were digging the ditch for the last resting place of their comrades in arms, receiving an extra ration for their work. People wearing comfortable clothes, who sleep in warm comfortable beds and have plenty of food, may disapprove of this work by Union men. But should they reason that this work must be done and that the poor starving fellows received an extra ration and fresh air for their work, thereby perhaps saving their own lives, critics may think differently. Oftimes the dead were not drawn out for two days. I have counted two hundred or more dead men at one time; and as they lay exposed to the hot sun, the effect can better be imagined than described. Thus the dead who died inside the stockade were disposed of for the first two months; after that they were carried outside to the dead house.

By this time the spring campaign had opened, and with the new and old prisoners who then occupied that

small space of ground, the death roll was surprising to behold. For the want of stretchers, blankets and sticks of wood were called into requisition and, surprising as it may seem, it came to be considered a privilege to assist in this work, so that men would contend for it. It even came to be a matter of trade, and from one to three dollars in United States money was the price for being permitted to carry out a dead body. In doing this work, the bearers would not only have the opportunity of breathing God's free air for a short time, but they often obtained admission to the hospital for a few moments, where they were likely to find some untasted portion of food that had been given to the sick, and this they would obtain to appease their hunger. They were also allowed by the guard to collect any wood that lay along the roadside; and often two fellows who had given two dollars for a dead body, would bring in wood that they could sell for five. Each morning men were detailed to carry the sick out of the gate, into a small place that had been partitioned off, where the doctors would prescribe for those who were not admitted to the hospital. Generally, the doctors and assistants would get through with this work in a couple of hours, but one very warm morning, the third of June, for

some reason they were much longer ; those who carried the sick out were waiting at the gate for orders to pass out after those who were to be brought back. A fellow who was acting as sergeant of a ninety said to the guard—who was walking to and fro between the gate and Dead Line : “How long before we can go out after our sick?”

“When we get ready,” was the prompt reply of the Johnny, who was posted there to keep the crowd from pressing too near the gate. Being of the number detailed that morning, I stood behind the young fellow who was acting-sergeant, with my hands upon his shoulders. I advised him to say nothing to the rebel, as the latter appeared to be one of those brave men who would as soon fire into a crowd of defenceless men as not. But the acting-sergeant again said :

“Come, we want our men, they will die out there in the hot sun.”

“Stand back thar !” was the reply.

Then the sergeant said : “I guess you don’t know your business. Do you, anyhow?”

Whereupon the Reb stepped backward, lifted his gun and fired. The gun was levelled at the sergeant’s breast, but just as the wretch pulled the trigger, the ser-

geant caught the bayonet with his left hand, pulling it down so the ball struck him in the abdomen, passing through his body. As my hands were upon his shoulders, and I saw the quick motion of the rebel, I turned sideways and the ball, passing through the sergeant's body, struck me on my left hip, grazing my back, just cutting the skin, then passed through another man's leg into the ground. Had the ball passed through my hips, in all probability it would not have hurt me as badly as it did.

It was about three hundred feet from where the shot was fired to the place where our boys were camped. They all rose on hearing the report, and seeing me hopping on one foot towards them, Hull exclaimed :

“Boys, Dufur is shot!”

And they all started to meet me. As they came up, I held out my leg, and, swinging it around to assure myself that no bones were broken, said :

“Yes boys, I am shot, but I think it only a flesh wound. See how I can move my foot.”

They gathered around me, and as the wound was exposed to view, they had a hearty laugh at my expense, as there was not enough of blood to wet my clothing. For

a long time afterward when the boys were lying quietly about, some one would suddenly spring to his feet, and, going through as many manoeuvres as an Ethiopian jig dancer, hopping upon one foot, and kicking the other, would exclaim: "Don't be frightened, boys, it's only a flesh wound, etc., etc. I felt so thankful that my life had again been spared that I rather enjoyed the bit of sport they had at my expense.

About this time Milo Farnsworth was taken sick, and each day for weeks he grew worse, believing himself all the time to be gaining. Poor fellow! He was only seventeen or eighteen years of age, and had only been in the Regiment about three weeks when he was captured. Almost direct from a happy home in Northern Vermont, where as an only son he was petted and loved by fond parents and kind sisters, he came to that loathsome den that had been selected for one of the most terrible human sacrifices that the world has ever seen! Into these narrow walls were now crowded nearly thirty thousand men, with no bed but the earth, no shelter but the heavens. Daily they were seen crawling from holes, in which, like swine, they had burrowed.

Every root of the mammoth pines was dug from the ground and converted into fuel. Two large pine trees were left standing in the south-east corner of the stockade, as before fuel became so necessary to our existence the prisoners collected in the immediate vicinity of these trees, and constructed their rude shelters or homes; therefore, we could not afterward fell them without endangering life.

We had not been long in the stockade when, for want of pure water, the men began digging wells near the border of the swamp. They obtained water, and a great improvement it was on that taken from the filthy brook, directly over which the Rebs' cook-house was built, and from which the prisoners were supposed to take all the water used during imprisonment. Had we been compelled to use the water from this brook through those warm summer months, I cannot think there would have been a man living at the end of eight months to tell the story. The brook was completely covered with floating grease and offal from the cook-house, and of course nothing but stern necessity would have made us willing to touch our lips to such a forbidding mixture. It was soon discovered that the farther from the brook the wells were

dug, the better and colder the water, although it required patience and hard work to dig wells on the higher ground, where from twenty to thirty feet of earth had to be taken out before striking a vein of water, with only an old piece of a shovel blade and half a canteen as implements of labor. Nevertheless we were amply paid with the good cold water we ever after received.

A man who was quietly sleeping in his little blanket tent near the edge of one of these deepest wells, was instantly buried alive by the falling in of the earth. This was on June 28th, and the day following two men were wounded—one mortally—by the guard. A man stepped inside the Dead Line, and was at once fired upon, but instead of receiving any injury himself, it had fallen upon the innocent two who were lying down in their tent.



## CHAPTER VII.

It was a common occurrence to hear the report of a rifle, followed by the cry of some poor fellow who had been shot while endeavoring to procure a chip or a stick of wood across the Dead Line, under cover of darkness.

Nearly every day during May, June and July prisoners came in. Some were allowed to keep their blankets and overcoats, and a few had pieces of tents, which, buttoned together, made a shelter. It would naturally seem that men who were unfortunate enough to be inmates of so terrible a place would be drawn together by stronger ties of friendship than in other and happier circumstances. But this did not prove to be the case with a certain class, whom it was our misfortune to have as fellow-prisoners. There were a few New York "Bounty Jumpers" and men who came into the army through the New York draft, who were taken prisoners at the first opportunity they had of surrendering, and with the intention of living by their wits. This being defined, is simply robbing, thieving, and at the same time, escaping every act pertaining to a true soldier's duty. These desperadoes formed them-

selves into a gang which we called "Mosby's Raiders." They lived by robbing, and sometimes by almost murdering their comrades in misfortune. One writer has said: "We would fain believe such men are exceptions among Federal soldiers, but it may be we cannot tell how harsh treatment, and long-continued neglect and abuse, would degrade manhood, in any case."

Now I have cause to know that the harsh treatment that these desperadoes received was previous to their connection with the Federal army, and that they were the same kind of men, had the same dispositions and principles, when at home, as when they stood on the scaffold in Andersonville. They did not interfere with me, as I had nothing to tempt their cupidity.

There were all kinds of speculation going on in the prison. On one occasion, flour was issued instead of meal and being very hungry and thinking more of quantity than of quality, I thought I would exchange my flour for meal. There were some who did not use all their meal, being sick, or else were able to buy articles of food from the Rebs; therefore I started out with my twenty-four hours' rations in the lining of an old coat-sleeve—my pantry. Of course I wanted the flour myself, very much; but it would not

appease hunger as much as the amount of cheaper food I could obtain for it. As I passed down the street shouting : "Who will swap meal for flour?" a man opened the door of the largest tent in the prison and beckoned me to enter. I was very thoughtless in going so near this tent, knowing it to be a rendezvous of the Raiders, six or eight of the leaders owning the tent together. Seeing I hesitated a moment, two other men stepped out and told me to walk in, if I wished to trade. I dared not do otherwise, and entered, whereupon a pug-nose, pugilistic ruffian, took from a shelf a small box, already containing six or eight quarts of flour, and told me to empty my own into that. I did so, and then waited two or three minutes, thinking they might not rob me, relying a little upon my lameness in eliciting their sympathy. But no; they were the wrong men to sympathize with suffering humanity. One might as well look for a tender spot in the heart of an Egyptian mummy. One of them at length said :

"What are you waiting here for?"

"For the meal I expect you to give me," I said.

"Oh, get out of this," he said, taking me by the arm, and as I did not start at once, and told them it was very hard to be robbed of the small allowance that I was to live

on for twenty-four hours, I was knocked down and brutally kicked out of the tent. I could show no resistance, as I was weak and lame. Such were the characteristics of the Andersonville Raiders.

I think there were thirty-two guard posts, or sentry boxes around the stockade, and after nine o'clock in the evening every thirty minutes the guard would cry the hour of the night.. The prison was bounded on the east by a vast wilderness and swamp, and from them came such vast number of mosquitoes that after being scorched by the burning sun through the day, we were tormented through the night by these pests; consequently the poor fellows who were too sick and feeble to guard against them and the like, might die by these plagues alone, if by nothing else.

The scurvy made its appearance in the fore part of the summer. This disease is brought on by want of change in diet, and its horrors none can know but those who have experienced them. Sometimes the disease would appear in the limbs, and the cords would be so drawn up the victim could not walk. The limbs became swollen and the flesh discolored, as if it had been beaten with clubs; and so soft, the impress of the fingers would

remain a long time. Sometimes it would be confined to the bones, and not show itself on the surface at all; in such cases it would be attended with the most intense pain. At other times it would appear in the mouth, and the teeth would become separated from the gums and finally drop out altogether, and not a tooth be left in the jaw. I have seen hundreds of cases of this disease, where the men actually starved to death, because they were unable to eat the coarse food furnished them by the Rebel Government.

The blood of the men was in such an impure state that the least break of the skin would be almost sure to lead to a gangrenous sore, and many amputations were performed in consequence. Under the influence of a scorching sun, the entire upper surface of the foot would become blistered, and this would break, leaving the flesh exposed. Having no covering for it, nor any way to protect it from the heat, gangrene was inevitable; and this would be followed by a loss of the foot, if not the whole limb, by amputation. In many cases the victims were so much debilitated when the attempt was made they would never recover from the influence of the chloroform.

Some became totally blind, occasioned in all proba-

bility by the victims being constantly exposed to the sun's bright rays.

About two thousand men died in the month of June, and during this month it rained twenty-one days in succession; and it was scarcely strange that under these conditions disease should increase and assume every imaginable form. Captain Wirz appeared perfectly happy as he daily went his rounds, threatening, swearing at and misusing all those with whom he came in contact. In no way did he show by word or act that he had the least spark of sympathy or care for the lives of the unfortunate beings who had fallen into his power. He did not seem to realize that it was possible for his tyranny to have an end; little did this wretch think during his monopoly that any of the starving heroes who were now so completely at his mercy would in so short a time be numbered among those whom the Nation honored; and that the same voices now so piteously pleading to him for bread, would be heard exclaiming "Andersonville! Andersonville!" as he was launched into eternity by the hangman's hands.

On the 29th of June three hundred prisoners came in from West Virginia. These newcomers afforded the Raiders, or camp robbers, new fields of labor. By this

time they had become so bold that they did not care for, or choose the shadows of night for their atrocious work, but would in the broad open light of day commit any crime from petty larceny to the foulest murder. Upon the entrance of the unsuspecting new prisoners, one of their number—a German—was at once seized upon by the mob and his watch that he had saved and one hundred and twenty-five dollars were taken from him. In cutting his pocket, they inflicted a serious wound upon the man's leg; this dastardly act aroused the indignation of all, and at once the injured man proceeded to the gate, where he came face to face with Capt. Wirz. I saw the guard making ready to fire upon the man who was wholly unconscious of danger, knowing naught of the Dead Line or the rules of the prison. But as the old Dutchman—as we called Wirz—met the enraged man just as he passed the boundary of death, his life was saved. He held a short conversation with the Captain, talking what I supposed to be the German language. I could plainly see by the gestures of the two men they were very much excited. All at once the old Captain motioned the man back into camp, and as fast as the Captain could walk he proceeded to the ration wagon that had just passed through the gate

loaded with cooked meal—called mush—that they were at that time using. He ordered the wagon out before it was unloaded and, stepping upon a box, made the following remarks :

“Men, listen to vat I say! Py Got I will never issue any more rations to you, till you tell who dese men be dat ish robbin’ you!”

The key-note had been struck when a man of his own nationality was robbed, and help seemed at hand. The heads of the institution offered to any man who would come out and give the names of all he knew of these men, and point them out to the officials,—that he should at once be taken out and given a parole of honor ;—that he should have the limits of a mile around the prison, ten dollars in greenbacks, and should be the first to go home.

I for one could have given the desired information, but like the rest of my comrades dare not do it. In one sense of the word these men were in power, as the physical strength of one of them was equal to that of ten of the living skeletons whom they oppressed. We did not know the strength of the gang, and it was thought by some that many among us who appeared all right, at heart were villains. Living in the immediate vicinity of the headquar-



ters of the gang, I saw and heard all that was going on. In about an hour from the time of the robbery, eight rebel sergeants walked into the gate, each with revolver in hand, and proceeded direct to the large tent headquarters. The commander in a stern voice, ordered the inmates to come forth. Oh how innocent and ignorant those desperadoes appeared! Up to that moment they had enjoyed the firm belief that no man within these walls dared for one moment harbor the thought of bringing them to justice. Hundreds of men looked on with delight, acknowledging that one redeeming act had shown bright upon the pages of rebel barbarity. Eight men were taken from this tent and marched out of the gate. Upon this, the prisoners saw that the "Rebs" were going to aid us in earnest, and all arose as one man and pointed the guilty parties out to the rebel sergeants as fast as we could discover their whereabouts. Thus, about seventy-five Raiders were marched out of the gate in less than two hours; and during the remainder of that day and the following forenoon the number was swollen to one hundred and twelve.

The Confederate Government at once sent word to our Government stating the facts of the situation, and asking what was to be done with these men. Our Govern-

ment ordered that they be tried by a jury of our own men, and punished as their reason dictated. The next day but one, twelve of these men were returned to the prison with a ball and chain upon their legs that they were to wear during the remainder of their imprisonment; they were also to be tried for robbery in our own lines, if the Federal Government saw it. The remainder of the gang—excepting six of its leaders—were turned back into the camp and compelled to run the gauntlet; two ranks of men, facing each other, extended from the gate back into the camp, perhaps two hundred feet. These ranks were probably fifty deep, as the exciting scene brought thousands of men to the spot. The two ranks were armed with sticks, clubs and everything with which they could inflict a blow. At first, one man ran through at a time, until fifteen or twenty had passed, whereupon the gang standing in the gate, awaiting their time, made a rush through as one man, thereby escaping many blows that would have justly fallen upon them had they passed through singly. One man, small in stature, and a sailor, drew a dirk knife, as he started upon this perilous race, and swinging it to the right and left, as he broke through the ranks, badly wounded quite a number by the thrusts he so dexterously

executed; but he was quickly overpowered and so badly injured he lived only a few hours. Two others also lost their lives through this mode of punishment. That night Andersonville was quiet. The midnight cry of murder, so familiar to our ears, was a thing of the past. Andersonville slept. The following day officers were chosen, and a regular police organization was the result. After this, woe unto him who fell into their hands and was found guilty.

Gen. Winders' headquarters were for a short time one-half mile from the stockade, and although we very seldom saw him, it was through his orders that any business of importance appertaining to the prison was transacted.

The latter part of June prisoners were taken out to work on the stockade, as an addition to the old stockade was found necessary, so many new prisoners coming in that it was crowded almost to suffocation. The men who worked on the stockade received an extra ration each day for their labor. On the first day of July the addition to the stockade was completed and opened for the reception of prisoners. All detachments above forty-eight were ordered to be inside it in two hours, and failing to do this,

their blankets, etc., would be confiscated. This then was the alternative. Thirteen thousand men must crowd through an opening eight or ten feet in width, in this short space of time, or lose their little property so essential to their comfort. There was a regular stampede towards the open space, and many had to creep in upon their hands and knees, being unable to walk, though feeling anxious for a change, if only from one prison pen to another. I could never fully understand why this order was given in regard to the confiscation of blankets in default of our moving so quickly, unless it was like so many other acts of brutality we were daily subjected to at their hands to make us as unhappy and cause us as much suffering as it was in their power.

Quite a number of the First Vermont Cavalry came in after the Battle of the Wilderness, and among the rest, Brigham and Town of my own company. They camped on the north side of the stockade. One day as I was on my way to the north side to visit the Vermont boys, I stopped for a few moments to look at a squad of the 27th Mass. Volunteers, who had just come in, and were seated upon the ground near the brook. My attention was first attracted by the remarks of one of the number, who said :

"Boys, we will never get out of this place alive. I am discouraged, and have no heart to try to fix any place to live in." Whereupon another member of the party commenced talking to his discouraged comrade, in regard to his depressed and forlorn condition, and while he was thus speaking, I recognized him as James Miller, of Troy, Vt., whom I had not seen since I was ten years of age, I now being twenty. I at once introduced myself as a fortune-teller, and approaching Miller, offered for a trifling sum to reveal to him the hidden secrets of his past history. For a moment their present condition was forgotten, and curiosity prevailed.

"Now is your time, Jimmy," said one.

"Give it to him gently," exclaimed another. While these joking remarks were being made at Miller's expense I took from my pocket a small stone that I had two years before picked up on the shores of the Chesapeake and, on account of its crystal-like appearance, had not thrown it away. While looking through this stone, I claimed that his past life was revealed, and being well acquainted with his people, I at once told him the number of his brothers and sisters and the ages of his father and mother. But

carrying the joke a little too far, I commenced spelling out the Christian names of the family, when Miller sprang to his feet, saying:

“Now I want to know who you are.”

I could not keep from laughing at the excitement he exhibited, and so told him my name. He was much pleased to meet me, although I was but a boy of ten years when he last saw me at my father's house. After this we often met, as we visited from one family to the other. The physical condition of our family was very good until about the middle of June, when four of the thirteen whom I designate as “our family” began to fail in health.

Lieut. Hyde of my company, who passed as a Sergeant, captured at Brandy Station, Oct. 11, 1863, and about eight months a prisoner, was suffering from that usually fatal disease—in this place—diarrhoea. He was a Free Mason, and from a piece of bone I had made him a small scarf pin representing the order—the square and compass; as the poor fellow was so very destitute of anything pertaining to the comforts of life, I borrowed from him the scarf pin, and going to the gate, I handed it out to a rebel sergeant whom I had seen wearing the same symbol, I said: “The man who wears this is lying in a critical

condition, and I wish you would kindly call upon him." He bowed assent, and during the day came in. Being on the watch for him, I at once guided him to where the sick man lay. He talked with him an hour or so and went out, saying he would call again. The next morning he walked hurriedly into the Lieutenant's tent, threw down a parcel, and walked out. It contained one pair of drawers, one shirt, a pair of feeting, some medicine and food. We were encouraged by the kindness the rebel Sergeant had shown the poor fellow, as the Lieutenant was beloved by all his company. But alas! as in many other cases, aid came too late; in a few days Lieut. Hyde had become so very low that he was taken out to the hospital; and a few hours later a man came in bearing the sad intelligence that our comrade was dead, and saying that with farewell messages to ourselves, he had requested that his dying love be conveyed to his young wife, with his wish that she would meet him in heaven. When the Lieutenant fell into the enemy's hands he was not recognized as an officer, so passed as a private, believing he would be better treated. At the time of his death four others of our company were very feeble,—Brown, Farnsworth and Jocelyn not being able to walk.

## CHAPTER VIII.

In addition to our many sorrows, there were also many cases of extreme suffering caused by the use of poison vaccine. I say poison, as it acted as such, in every sense of the word. Soon after our arrival in Andersonville the report was circulated that there was a case of smallpox in camp, whereupon the rebel doctor at once came inside and vaccinated two hundred or over, and also gave some vaccine to the sergeants of nineties, that all could use it who wished. Whether the rebels did this intentionally or not, we could not say; but it certainly became a melancholy fact among us. My own experience was one not to be forgotten. As soon as the vaccine began to work upon my arm I saw there was something wrong, as it did not in the least resemble anything I had ever seen. My arm was sore for a year, and after healing a scar was left as large as a silver twenty-five cent piece; and even now a sharp stinging pain is occasionally felt, to remind me of rebel iniquity. I well remember the sad condition of one man, who from using the vaccine had a sore break out under his arm and eat into his vitals, the



opening being large enough to admit a man's hand before death came to the rescue. It was nothing strange to see a man who had been vaccinated six months, with his arm half or two-thirds eaten off, the bare cords exposed to view, and only dry, dark colored skin covering the bone.

### THE EXECUTION.

On the twelfth day of July the six camp robbers were brought in and hanged. They had been tried and found guilty of robbery and murder. A scaffold had been erected on the south side of the stockade, and a noted character whom we called "Limber Jim" was chosen to act as executioner. The scaffold consisted of two pieces of 4x4 joists as uprights, and another 4x6 framed into the top of these, from which the six fatal ropes were suspended. On the inside of each upright was a cleat, nailed about six feet from the ground, and from one cleat to the other ran a plank, fourteen feet long. This plank was sawn apart in the middle, and a prop placed under each end, near where it was sawn apart. A rope was attached to the foot of each prop, and by pulling on the ropes the plank would break down where it was sawn. On this plank the culprits were to stand, while the executioner,

standing upon another plank just in the rear of the trap, was to perform the awful work.

About 2 P. M. Capt. Wirz came in with the six condemned men. As they advanced to the scaffold they halted, and Capt. Wirz spoke as follows :

“These men have been tried and convicted by their own fellows, and I now return them to you in as good condition as I received them. You can now do with them as your reason, justice and mercy dictate, and may God protect both you and them.”

The police formed a square around the scaffold, the prisoners were conducted inside this, and as a man came forward to pinion their arms, one of the prisoners, a large muscular-looking man, said, looking up at the suspended ropes :

“I say *never go up there!*”

Whereupon he raised his arm, and striking down the men in front of him, he rushed through the crowd and across the prison, closely pursued by the police. He was soon recaptured and returned. During his absence the fatal noose had been adjusted, and his five comrades in crime were standing upon the drop. Apparently they had considered the whole thing a farce until the last moment.

The Catholic priest was endeavoring to minister to their spiritual wants, but the doomed men apparently paid but little heed to the consoling words of the Christian man. They were asked if they had anything to say. One of them said he was guilty of almost any and everything, but not of the charges now preferred against him. Another told an acquaintance to give his watch to his wife in New York, should he live to go out, and not to tell her how he died.

Meal sacks were then drawn over their heads; the drop fell and five of the Andersonville robbers were launched into eternity. The rope broke, letting the man on the left of the scaffold fall to the ground. Pleading for mercy, he was again placed under the beam, and standing upon the plank occupied by the executioner, was pushed off, and "Moseby," the Leader of the Raiders," as he was called, with his five criminal comrades, had gone the way from whence no traveler returns. After an hour they were taken down and carried to the dead-house, the timbers were removed, and there was nothing to show that the same ground now so peaceably occupied by law-abiding people was so short a time before the scene of such terrible work.

During the months of July and August the heat was almost unbearable, and those whose naked feet were exposed to the hot sand on one side and the burning rays of the sun on the other, with no cover or shade, except the shadows of night, suffered almost indescribably. I often started from where I slept to walk to the brook—a distance of fifteen rods—and was obliged to step into the shade of some tent, or substitute for one, to keep my feet from being blistered. If I stopped for a moment I was compelled to remove the surface from the earth on a spot large enough to permit my feet to stand upon the cooler sand.

During the month of July two of our family, and of my own company, died. Milo Farnsworth, the young man I have previously mentioned, rapidly grew worse, and on the 16th he asked me to take a small pocket Bible and some pictures, and keep them for him. I do not imagine he did this thinking he would go so soon, but he was so sick he was afraid he might lose them. That night I drew his rations for him, and made a little water gruel for his supper. Not a very palatable dish for a sick man, water and a coarse unsifted corn meal boiled together without salt, but such it was, and the last supper the poor

boy ever ate. I lay down beside him that night and at half past one in the morning I heard the guard on the wall cry the hour of the night. I then spoke to Farnsworth, asking him to turn from his right side to his left. He did so, and I asked him how he was feeling. He replied: "O better, I think." As the guard cried the hour of three I spoke to him again, and receiving no reply, I lay my hand upon his face, and saw at once that the messenger Death had again visited our unhappy home, and during the last hour and a half that I had slept, had taken my comrade from my side. I carefully moved around among the boys who were sleeping nearest me, and in a whisper informed them of Farnsworth's death. It was not safe to make the event known outside of our family, and again go to sleep, as his body might be carried off to some other part of the camp. The next morning, or a couple of mornings later would be safer, as the body could then be carried out and the bearers be well paid for their labor with the wood they would be allowed to bring in. This was often done, and considered a joke rather than a theft.

Comrade Hull and myself watched by the dead body of Farnsworth until daylight. I then cut a curl of hair from his head, and placing it between two leaves of his

little Bible, I wrote upon the fly-leaf the date of his death, how long he had been sick, etc., and that morning we were permitted to carry him to the dead-house. This was the first time I had been outside the stockade for over three months, or during my imprisonment. We laid our dead comrade beside the many emaciated forms that a few hours before had been talking of home and comfort, and now were waiting the final act, the removal to the grave.

I asked the guard if he would allow us to gather some limbs for wood, and he reluctantly complied. We had to vary a little from our direct course to the gate, in order to get the wood, as it had been gathered very clean by those who preceded us. I was somewhat lame at the time, and not being very strong, I fell with the stick I was trying to carry. Six months before I would have thought it an easy task to carry four such sticks, but starvation had deprived me of strength. As I fell I went over a little bank of earth, and I think for a second it startled the guard, as he instantly brought his rifle into position, thinking I was going to run. He then called me a d——d Yankee hog, and said I was not satisfied with what I could carry but wanted the whole woods. He told me to drop it and move

on; but by begging and pleading, I was finally allowed to carry the stick inside.

On the 24th Frank B. Jocelyn died. He was taken prisoner the same night as Farnsworth and myself. Poor Frank! How hard it was for him to die in this place. A few days before his death, he was admitted to the so-called hospital, but his condition was not in the least benefited by the removal, excepting that the chances of procuring a little medicine were more favorable in the hospital. I believe he would not have died so soon, had he remained inside with his friends.

Six of our family, Hyde, Brown, Farnsworth, Jocelyn, Hull and myself, occupied a parcel of ground about 12 x 6—that is, we slept side by side—six of us—in a row. The first of April we selected this piece of ground for an indefinite space of time, each man except myself enjoying good health at the time, and all seeming confident that the near future would deliver us from bondage, and that we should again clasp the hands of loved ones,

“In the freelands of our own beloved homes.”

But alas! how soon the frail vessel of hope is dashed upon the hidden reef. In three short months four of our comrades fell victims to rebel barbarity. Only two were

left, and Hull soon fell a victim to that loathsome disease—scurvy. His teeth became loose, and he could scarcely keep them from falling out.

Nearly twenty-five thousand men were now crowded within the narrow walls; and, as our honored statesman, James G. Blaine, has said, “many of them the bravest and best, the most devoted and heroic of those grand armies that carried the flag of our country to final victory.”

I saw one poor fellow—a German—who, not being proof against rebel cruelty, had become hopelessly insane, and had torn his clothing from his body. Entirely nude, he was stretched at full length upon the burning sand, his body actually blistered by the sun. I doubt any sane man living one hour in the same situation. His voice could be heard half way across the camp, saying:

“Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ!”

These were the only words I heard the poor creature speak, and his voice gradually grew weaker till his words became scarcely audible. At last the old Captain was prevailed upon to allow him to be placed outside the Dead Line, in the shade of the stockade, and there he died in a few hours.



A few Indians belonging to a Western regiment were captured and brought into Andersonville. I think there were ten or fifteen of them, and in less than ninety days, not one was living. The confinement was what they could not stand.

About twenty-five or thirty of the Massachusetts colored troops, captured at Fort —, were brought in the fore part of the season, and a Major belonging to the same regiment came with them. Had he belonged to a white regiment he would not have been confined in Andersonville, but would have been placed with other commissioned officers. But by holding a commission in a “d—d nigger regiment,” as the rebs called it, he was considered no better. He had received a bad wound in his foot at the time of his capture, and when he asked the Doctor to dress his wound, I heard the medical gentleman tell him to go to his niggers and get his wound dressed, if he wished to have it done.

Soon after the arrival of the colored troops, an old southern planter came in, and looking over the camp, saw a colored man among the rest whom he believed was one of his slaves escaped from his plantation in 1856. The old planter talked with him, but he denied all knowledge

of slavery, saying he was born in Massachusetts, which statement was vouched for by his comrades. After questioning and cross-questioning him, and receiving no satisfactory reply, the old planter retired, saying that in all probability he had "mistook" his man. But the next day proved that he had not so easily relinquished all claim to our colored comrade, as he returned with two of the oldest slaves on his plantation. The planter's name was Samuel Johnson. Arriving at the prison, he, with one of the old negro slaves, was admitted by Capt. Wirz, and at once proceeded to the quarters of the colored troops. As they were near our own quarters, and we thought it strange to see a citizen walk into camp, followed by Capt. Wirz and a guard, many of us followed them to see what was going on. Walking in among the negroes, the planter said to the old slave,

"Sam, look these men over sharp, and tell me if you know any of them."

The old man at once assumed all the dignity requisite for the imaginary honor conferred upon him, and looking as wise as Solomon when he decided to divide the baby equally, he devoted some time to rubbing some old brass-bowed spectacles, and then gracefully adjusting them, he

slowly looked from one to another until his eyes rested upon the man whom the planter claimed as his own. Slowly raising his hand, and pointing his finger at him, he said,

“Dat am Sam Johnson’s nigger, sure.”

The officer in charge asked for no further proof in the matter, and the Massachusetts colored soldier who had for eight years been at liberty to act, speak, and condemn slavery, again found himself in bondage, and subject to the yoke that for three years he had faced death to lift from the shoulders of his race.

A rebel soldier was called in, and at the point of the bayonet the man who had faithfully served his country and miraculously escaped the Fort Pillow massacre where he saw his wounded comrades promiscuously butchered, was marched out of the prison gate.

This man appeared very intelligent, and said to some of his comrades before leaving them, that it was not for long, as he believed the end of the war was near at hand.

Another colored soldier belonging to the same regiment, who was captured at the same time, was struck in the forehead by a spent ball which just crushed the skull, leaving the minie wedged in the bone. I heard him ask

a Confederate physician if he would try and extract the ball, or in some way alleviate the terrible pain. The dashing young Doctor, whose well-fitting new grey uniform, covered with brass buttons, and well polished boots and sword bespoke the self-imagined aristocrat, made some abusive remark to the poor sufferer, and left him. A few days later, as I stood looking at the dead, who were brought to the south gate previous to their removal to the dead house, I saw the body of the colored soldier who had so piteously begged aid of the young rebel Doctor. The men who knew the circumstances of the case, unanimously denounced the wretch as no better than a murderer, for had he removed the ball from the fellow's head, the chances were that he would have recovered. In two other cases where men were hit in the head by spent balls, they recovered when the balls were extracted. One of these men, Henry Crow, Company C, 5th Vermont Infantry, recovered from his wound, but was not of a sufficiently strong constitution to stand the hardships to which we were subjected, and on August 26th he died, his grave or number, being 4883.

During the months of July and August, the death-rate was appalling; the process of slow starvation, com-

bined with the terrible heat that would in a short time blister the unprotected parts of our skeleton bodies, were horrors that none but demons could endure. For about two weeks during the warmest weather, one hundred and fifteen was the average number of deaths each day, which is equivalent to one every twelve minutes and thirty-one seconds. When the mortality exceeded two hundred, or reached exactly that number, which was quite frequently, every seven minutes and twelve seconds, a poor, wretched mortal, who but a few short months before possessed health and happiness, yielded to famine and disease—the result of rebel barbarity.

As new prisoners came in, some would exclaim, “Is this hell?”

Well might the poor fellows thus christen this place of torture, for it had all the appearance of being a God-forsaken place.

Our rations of one pint of coarse unsifted corn meal to each man was issued for about two months; after that, we drew cooked rations consisting of a chunk of cold mush, the meal being boiled in large kettles, then after cooling it was shoveled into capacious boxes, hauled into

the prison, and issued to the starving men. This forbidding mixture was without salt, but not without filth of almost every conceivable kind. Thousands of sick men who would have been under the doctor's care had they been in our lines, had this repulsive stuff daily set before them, with the alternative, "Partake or die."

One of the prisoners who was out on a parole of honor and saw our food prepared at the cook-house, told me that if the boys who kept soul and body together by subsisting upon this dirty mixture, knew how it was prepared, and what foul matter it contained, he believed many of them would actually starve to death before they would eat it. I begged him to say nothing to the poor fellows in regard to the matter, as they already knew too much suffering to have another drop added to the cup. No! God forbid that they should know more of the pre-concerted cruelty than was actually necessary.

It was calculated that each chunk of mush was about equal to the one pint of dry meal we had previously drawn. Had the cooked meal been free from filth, we would have preferred it to the dry, but on account of the scarcity of wood, we chose the latter.

Lumps of dry meal as large as the end of a man's thumb, flies, bugs, whole kernels of corn, pieces of bark, ashes, coals, hairs, etc., we considered trifling things, for those who were not ravenously hungry took time to separate the above named seasonings before eating. But when filth was purposely added to this already unpalatable mixture, and that of the vilest and most outrageous kind that the human mind can conceive, then God help the unfortunates that fell into such hands. Hundreds of survivors who passed this trying ordeal, can to-day testify to the truth of my assertion.

## CHAPTER IX.

As I stated in the opening chapter of this work, I have no intention of placing before the public any statement that differs from my own personal experiences—what I saw, heard and suffered. And with my own well-preserved reminiscences of those dark days, and with the assistance of a small pocket diary, wherein I daily recorded the heart rending scenes and incidents that came under my observation, I now, after more than a third of a century, endeavor to draw a true picture of scenes and suffering that can never be erased from the minds of those who participated in them.

While speaking of the atrocities perpetrated upon Union soldiers when prisoners of war, I must not omit a brutal assault upon a young man who belonged to a Massachusetts regiment, and was taken prisoner during the month of July, 1864. I first met him in Camp Sumter, or Andersonville, soon after his arrival at that place. I saw him nearly every day during his confinement there, and at Florence, S. C. I also came from Charleston to



Annapolis, Md., on the same transport, and was with him during our stay at Parole Camp. Being very well acquainted with him, I did not write his name, company or regiment in my diary, consequently am unable to give them to the reader. But should any ex-prisoner of war who was confined at any of the above named prisons during 1864, and was at Parole Camp at Annapolis, Md., in the spring of 1865, chance to peruse these lines, he will at once recognize by the following narrative the young Massachusetts soldier of whom I speak.

It was one day during the latter part of July or the forepart of August, that a squad of new prisoners came in, and with them was one whose deformity attracted attention even in that place. He was about twenty years of age, and I should say that previous to his disfigurement he was a fine looking young man. One of our family who was standing with the crowd at the gate, watching the new prisoners as they filed in through the small opening made at one side of the main gate or door, through which all prisoners passed, came hurrying back to where the rest of our boys were, and said, "If you will go down and look over the new prisoners, you will see a fellow whose face is literally cut to pieces."

By the expression and apparent excitement of our comrade, we reasoned that one of the new-comers was terribly wounded, and not waiting to be told more, thinking the man had very recently been wounded, we started for the farther end of the camp where the new arrivals had assembled. It was not difficult to identify our man, for, seated upon the ground, his head bent low, and his eyes apparently staring into space, was the one we sought. The comrade who first spoke to us of the poor fellow's sad condition, did not in the least exaggerate, for no shot or shell, sabre or bayonet, ever did its work more effectually. He did not appear to care for or hardly to notice the terrible surroundings. I made my way through the crowd as best I could, each one of the new arrivals being busily engaged in preparing a place that would be as dry and comfortable as possible. This gang was compelled to occupy the swamp, all the higher ground being taken up.

I spoke to one of the men who came with him, and was informed that they knew little more of the poor fellow's history than we ourselves. This lot of sixty or seventy men had been prisoners about a week or ten days,

and while en route from the place of capture to Andersonville, this man had joined them.

Comrade Hull and I approached the young man and spoke to him. At first he did not act as if he felt inclined to talk much, but after a little further conversation, he told us to come to him the next day, and he would inform us how he came to be so terribly wounded. We took hold and gave what assistance we could in leveling off the ground, and constructing as good a place as possible for him to live in.

If a fellow had a hole in a bank that he lived in, it was spoken of as his "tent."

The following day we again visited our unfortunate comrade, and found him in better spirits, though every hour he suffered from his wounds. After giving the unfortunate all the encouragement we could, painting Andersonville in glowing colors, we asked him for his story, which I now give to the reader.

In a skirmish with the rebels near ———, he was taken prisoner. After the skirmish was over, he was taken to headquarters, a farm-house, about three miles distant. Here he was left for about an hour in a room adjoining that in which the rebel officers were assembled.

The guard who came with him from the scene of action, remained with him in this room during that time, and was then relieved by a rebel soldier who came out of the officers' quarters. This new guard was given the prisoner's revolver, and mounting a horse that was saddled and standing at the door, he ordered the prisoner to march in front of him. Knowing naught of his destination, and thinking that possibly other prisoners might be quartered in the immediate vicinity, and that it would be useless to ask information of his surly, brutal-looking guard, he took up his line of march in silence, and waited results. He had traveled what he thought might be a mile from the house, when he heard the guard, who was riding a few paces in the rear, cock a revolver. Looking around, he saw the man holding the weapon in his two hands, apparently examining it. Knowing the revolver was the one that had been taken from him, and believing the man was merely examining his prize, he thought nothing more of the incident until some five minutes later, the sharp report of the same revolver echoed through the surrounding woods, which was instantly followed by a sharp stinging pain through his body, and a numbing or prickly sensation of the lower limbs. He had been

shot! Looking around, he saw his would-be assassin making ready to fire another shot.

The highway they were traversing ran through a pine forest. As he saw his assailant raise his arm to fire the second time, he quickly stepped to one side, and swinging himself around a large tree, just escaped the second missile of death, as the ball whizzed past his head.

Seeing the rebel was determined to murder him, he grasped at the last and only chance that presented itself, which was to take refuge among the mammoth pines, that now seemed to stand as angels of mercy, momentarily protecting him from the murderous brute.

These large trees standing close together, partially prevented the assassin from making his shots effective, while the poor boy was exerting his fast failing strength to keep the trees between him and his cruel assailant. In this he succeeded until the last shot had been fired, when he sank to the ground, shot through the body, and lying at the mercy of the man who had already shown himself a fiend incarnate.

The first shot had passed through the young man's body, coming out near the pit of the stomach. The other five shots having gone wide of their intended des-

tination, the Confederate dismounted from his horse, and drawing his sabre he walked up to the wounded boy, who was piteously pleading for mercy, and said, "Now you d—d Yankee dog, escape from me if you can," whereupon he dealt the young man a fearful blow across the forehead with his sabre, cutting the flesh from the bone from one side of his forehead to the other.

After repeated blows, supposing he had completed his hellish murder, he pulled off the boy's boots and departed. Not long afterward, a little girl who chanced to pass that way, discovered by a faint moan that the soldier was alive, and reported the fact to her mother, the latter with an old negro servant conveyed him to her humble dwelling. Here he remained in concealment seven weeks, being attended by an old physician of the locality, when he was discovered by a scouting party of rebel cavalry, and sent to Andersonville.

Many kinds of business were carried on inside the stockade. Men who were capable of commanding regiments of soldiers, men of education, medical students, law students, all sorts of mechanics, and finally, many of the bravest, and the best men of the country, mingled with that ever-changing mass of humanity.

Shouting the prices, and extolling the excellence of their merchandise, men could be seen buying, selling and exchanging their simple and apparently worthless stuff. Things which at these soldiers' homes were daily thrown away as worthless, were here carried about by these same men, guarded, extolled in quality and value, as if they were priceless gems.

A few razors found their way into the camp, consequently several barber shops were running full blast most of the time. These shops consisted of army blankets supported by four small sticks or poles, one at each corner, from which was conspicuously displayed the good work done inside, together with the price-list, to the passing and repassing thousands. The price was usually ten chews of tobacco, five cents in greenbacks or one dollar in Confederate money. Later two or three dollars was the price.

Many times have I watched the proceedings of these men, noting how diligently and earnestly they applied themselves to the business that would have been regarded as simple and childish had they been in a land where freedom, peace and plenty reigned.

Should I tell the reader that such a thing as a beer-shop existed in Andersonville, he would in all probability question my truthfulness, but such was actually a fact. There was not only one, but more than fifty places in different parts of the camp where beer could be bought by the glass, pint, quart or gallon. This was made by the prisoners from corn meal and water.

By adding a certain quantity of corn meal to a barrel of water, and exposing it to the hot sun for a certain length of time, it would ferment, and with the addition of a little "black-strap" molasses, and one or two other trifling ingredients, quite a palatable mixture was formed. Barrels of it were sold to those who were fortunate enough to possess a little cash.

The men who came into the prison with a little money and were shrewd enough to commence some kind of speculation, something like these mentioned, fared quite well as to food and shelter. Some men would sell the clothes from their backs, or the shoes from their feet for food.

I recollect seeing one poor fellow sell his boots for an extra ration of corn meal and bacon. A few days later, he was not only just as hungry as before, but his tender feet being exposed on one side to the hot sand, and on the



other to the burning rays of the sun, became blistered, and having no shelter, his case was sad indeed. His legs were soon badly swollen, and two weeks later I saw the body of this same young man, with others, awaiting at the gate, the death cart, that conveyed them to their last resting place.

Once, and only once, during my imprisonment, did I start upon any kind of speculation. Perhaps once in three or four weeks wheat flour would be issued to the camp, instead of meal. It was on one of these days I conceived the idea that I could improve my financial affairs and possibly double my stock in trade. This consisted of one pint of flour and about one-half pint of corn meal that I had kept from my ration the day before, and went to bed very hungry by so doing. I selected as good a place as I could find to start my store, mixed my meal and flour together, and baked it into pancakes, and with a shingle in one hand—to be used as a grocery stand—and my dish of cakes in the other, I started for the corner I had selected for my business stand.

For a while, all went as well as could have been expected. I had sold about one-fourth part of my cakes and felt so much encouraged I thought I could afford to

appropriate a small portion of the food to my own use, and then continue my sales. Ah! but this was one of the many, many mistakes the human family are liable to make during this short and uneven journey of life. A "financial mistake," the boys were wont to call it when they—afterwards—would tell the story of how I failed in business; for instead of doing as I intended, partake of a small part of my stock, and sell the rest, I failed to govern my appetite and devoured everything but the shingle!

As I walked back to our quarters, one of the boys asked me if I had sold out; all laughed when I replied "No, but I have eaten out, and shall now retire from business." I merely mention these trifling incidents that the reader may understand how confinement, starvation and constant suffering will not only emaciate the body, but weaken the mind. The mental condition of the sufferer undergoes a change and apparently the characteristics of the child prevail.

Before those who died inside the stockade were removed to the cemetery, the name, company and regiment, also the number of each, was written on a piece of paper and pinned to their clothing. Men who were detailed to bury the dead drew an extra ration of corn meal and a

quantity of whiskey for doing this gruesome work. During the first part of the season the dead were taken from the prison direct to the place of burial, but later on a dead-house was erected outside; and each afternoon the dead were carried out to this, where they remained until they could be taken to the burying ground.

## CHAPTER X.

It was during the month of August, when one hundred and fifteen per day was the death rate, and Andersonville was at its worst, and when many had given up in despair, only looking for the grim messenger's approach as inevitable, that a young Ohio soldier conceived the idea of attempting his escape by being carried to the dead-house as one of the dead prisoners. Some eighteen or twenty of us knew that the attempt was to be made, therefore we watched proceedings with intense interest. It was nearly night; six men were engaged picking up the dead, placing them on stretchers, each made of an old army blanket wrapped around two small poles. They carried their dead comrades past the guard at the gate and past any officers or men they might chance to meet near the gate or outside. After carrying out thirty or forty and seeing no particular notice had been taken by the Johnnies, the two boys who had been chosen to carry out the "living corpse" as the boys called the young man who was to personate the dead Yank, proceeded to his

quarters. As it was quite a risky undertaking, the young man appeared somewhat nervous when the two men called for him at "his tent," as the place rigged up to sleep in was called, whether canvas, turf or wood. His hair was long and unkempt, his face besmeared with dirt, and two strings were tied tightly around his wrists, preventing the blood from circulating, thus causing the hands to look white and deathlike. He was placed upon the stretcher, his white hands placed carelessly across his breast, he was turned on one side and his long hair lay loosely over his emaciated face. Three or four of us who were in the secret were in the "tent" and helped to arrange everything before he was carried out. The poor fellow had no comrades from his own regiment, and after giving us the name and address of his mother—in case he should lose his life—and seeing how he looked in his burial outfit, he shook hands with us and again taking his position on the stretcher, was carried to the gate. We approached the gate ahead of them, and there as usual were from fifty to two hundred emaciated, sickly looking fellows crowded around the entrance awaiting—they knew not what. Four other men approached the gate

from some other part of the camp, carrying two dead men nearly at the same time. The crowd gave way for them to pass. All of those who were knowing to the scheme gathered at the gate to see if it all passed off well. The three stretchers passed through the crowd almost unobserved, the living man occupying the front or foremost one. The guard, who stood between the opening in the dead line and the gate during such times, was hurriedly walking backward and forward, ordering the men to "fall back thar," "keep back," etc., when the foremost stretcher on the inside, and a mule team coming in after our mush-boxes on the outside, approached the gate at the same time. As the gate opened the men bearing the living man came suddenly in contact with the mule team, and in their endeavor to move sideways, the old blanket came off one of the poles and the seeming dead man fell to the ground. It was so common to see dead men in almost every direction that the crowd at the gate thought nothing of seeing them thrown around or lying around in any condition, therefore when the make-believe dead man fell to the ground he acted his part so well that no one but his friends knew he was alive.

As a take-off on the guards, who were always so ready to shoot, some one in the crowd jokingly cried out, "Shoot him; don't let him get away, shoot him!" whereupon the young man, whose nerves were at their highest tension, opened his eyes, but the guard fortunately stood with his back towards him and did not see his face, while one of the men, bending over to adjust the stretcher, instantly gave him the signal by a grip of the hand, and the poor frightened boy closed his eyes again. One of the men standing by my side, who was in the secret, whispered to me: "That was a close call, I fear he will be caught."

With teams passing, the men with the stretchers going to and fro, together with the crowd at the gate, the guard became somewhat "rattled," but when all was quiet and going well, he would assume all the dignity of a Russian duke. When the stretcher-bearers saw that they were not detected, they wound the blanket around the poles again the best they could; the "corpse" was laid upon it, and without further mishap they arrived at the dead-house. They were accompanied by a guard to the dead-house, and as the two faithful bearers lay our young hero down beside the last man brought in, one of them

spread a piece of an old blanket over his face and said in a low voice :

“Have courage, and may God help you.”

“Good bye.”

And stepping back, the other four men, who were not in the secret, deposited the two emaciated forms they bore beside that of the living man, and at the stern command of the guard, “Hurry up thar, Yanks,” they left him alone in his glory.

One of the men who assisted in this incident went out the following day and found a piece of white paper at the northwest corner of the building. The Ohio boy had promised to leave such a piece if he successfully escaped from the dead-house. Whether he made good his further escape, was shot, or taken to some other prison, we never knew.

Quite a number attempted escape by tunnelling out, and it was said that a few did succeed in gaining their liberty in this way. This was done by those who had erected their rude huts near the dead-line. These places of shelter were very ingeniously constructed of various kinds of material. Some were made wholly of earth, some had turf sides and blanket roofs, while others were



only holes dug in the side-hill. In these last, two or three men lost their lives by the earth caving in on them while asleep. Some of these tunnels were started from the interior of these huts. With a piece of an old shovel-blade, or one-half of a water canteen, they would commence digging a hole at an angle of forty-five degrees, and large enough for one man to work in. When they were sure that they were lower than the bottom of the stockade, which was five or six feet, they dug in a horizontal direction. The man digging lay on his face, passed the dirt to the man behind him, that man to the next, and so on, until it reached the surface and was carried to the swamp or brook in the darkness of night. It was a difficult and very uncertain thing, attempting to escape in this way. There was danger of the earth caving in upon them, then they knew nothing of where they would come out. One fellow, after he and his comrades had worked for weeks, dug up through to see where he was, and was somewhat surprised to see two rebel soldiers playing cards! He was under the guards' tent, and later when one of the "Rebs" fell into the hole, it led to discovery.

Each morning about six o'clock the Andersonville

back to every condition as set by "The Spot" recorded the prison walls.

It was the end of September, some two or three months after the men were kept out of our mess. It finally had been agreed that out of the fourteen men six months before the prisoners to stand in their place. It did not look that the future was going to be a man left to tell the story. When released a short and stout man came near the gate where we saw the men disappearing and soon heard the noise of the shouting and excitement. One of the few soldiers who brought in the news that the prisoners had returned, others to pass up and to study in their hands and a very general exchange of prisoners. We had a number in our ward and we were going to be told just what it will be a change. I say "The name is not one." The first six prisoners will have here to be very nothing. Some of the men were seen making noise with their mouths. While the men are given their usual work and so on. This night there was no sleep in the barracks. Some of the men were many of them in the past the light of day and their sleeping and talking and noise were louder in the night than in the day. Some of the men were seen making noise with their mouths.



would cheer as the little missiles of death made their appearance, saying that they came from home. Every fifteen minutes a shell was thrown at Ft. Sumter and every ten minutes one was broken in or over the city of Charleston; this was done for over four hundred days and nights in succession.

Col. L. C. Leavens, now treasurer of the Richford Savings Bank and Trust Company, at Richford, Vermont, was at that time an officer in the Union Army, commanding troops on Morris Island in Charleston harbor, consequently he was unwittingly the cause of making it so warm for some of the boys from his own State while paying his respects to the people of Charleston.

While occupying a vacant lot as our temporary camping ground we were allowed to go into the water, and there was not one minute during the daytime that there were not from twenty-five to two hundred men wading in the water hunting for oysters. They would wade nearly to their arm-pits, and when their bare feet came in contact with the coveted prize, and it was too far below the surface to reach with the hand, then down went the man out of sight, and up came the oyster. If it proved to be a genuine find it was safely deposited in the hungry fel-

low's pocket while he continued his prospecting. The second day we occupied this camp your humble servant, wet, cold and tired, picked his way shoreward; and the old hat before mentioned contained twenty-three of these valuable fellows. At night we fell back from the water's edge and a guard was posted between us and the water. One day a piece of square timber, some three feet long and 12 or 14 inches square, was floating around, the boys pushing it through the water from one to the other in play. A fellow who belonged to a Wisconsin regiment said: "When the men are called in to-night, you may know that I am standing in the water up to my neck, my head hidden from view behind that block of wood, my hands grasping each end to keep it in front of my face, and as soon as dark I will use it to help keep me afloat and will strike out for the lights on Morris Island." Just before dark we were ordered back from the water, and when the men were counted it was found that one man was missing. It was too dark to see the block of wood, even had they mistrusted that one of their Yankee prisoners had converted it into a transportation craft. The block of wood was not in sight the next morning, neither was the Yank, and the following morning when some of

the Johnnies were speculating as to his whereabouts, one of the boys who had prayed for his safe arrival at Morris Island, said: "In all probability he has drowned himself to save his life." From this camp we were removed to the race-course; here we remained for eleven days. During that time five of the prisoners were quite badly wounded by shells from our own guns. After giving us a taste of that of which they were obliged to make a full meal, they again put us on board a freight train and we were removed to Florence, S. C., one hundred and three miles distant.

## CHAPTER XI.

We arrived at Florence, S. C., on the evening of the 17th, and were taken from the cars and formed into line on the railroad track. After we were counted by the officer in charge, we were marched about a mile in the direction of the new stockade, which at that time was nearing completion. There were about one hundred and fifty slaves doing the work. As the Southerners did not wish to put any men inside the stockade until it was finished, the six hundred prisoners were halted about a half mile from it, and went into camp. A level piece of ground in an open field was selected for this camp, and two acres of ground were marked out in a square and a heavy guard was thrown around us.

We were situated near what appeared to be a large woods, one side of the camp extended to within about fifteen rods of its border. Two pieces of artillery were placed in a position commanding its side nearest the woods. The guards who came with us from Charleston were placed on duty over us. Having served two or three

years in the field, they did not consider it an everlasting honor to shoot a defenceless foe for the most trifling offense, as we had been accustomed to see guards do at Andersonville. These guardians around our little camp were placed in such a position that no prisoner could approach or cross their beats unobserved. No sooner was it ascertained by the prisoners that another Andersonville pen was awaiting them than a portion of the healthiest of them began to plan some mode of escape. To effect this they must either make a break for liberty in a body, or those who were able must run the guards under cover of the night; but if this latter plan was adopted, few could escape before the guards would be doubled, thus putting an end to all hopes of liberty until the dreaded prison doors should be thrown open to receive us.

Upon the third day this camp was occupied, it was rumored that the stockade was completed and that by night we would take up our quarters within its walls. It was a dull, cloudy day on the 20th, a cold, drizzling rain, sufficient to wet the ground, and the few dirty rags which but partially covered our bodies did not in the least enliven our prospects. The shades of night were falling. Comrade Hull and I stood side by side, discussing the probab-



ity of living through the winter, should there be no exchange of prisoners, when our attention was attracted by the report of a musket on the side of the camp nearest the woods. This was followed immediately by two more shots in rapid succession, and by a yell from the prisoners, who were all moving in the direction of the firing. I can give a vague illustration of this mass of moving humanity by comparing it to the breaking away of a boom strung across a river allowing a large quantity of logs to slowly move down the stream, with no uniform system. My comrade and I moved with the others, and as we neared the boundary of the camp the true character of the situation was no longer a mystery, as we beheld a squad of prisoners exerting themselves to their utmost in the attempt to capsize the two pieces of artillery, while others were seizing the guards and relieving them of their arms.

I recollect hearing but three shots fired during the break, although a few scattering shots were heard in different directions for two or three hours after the break was made. As the prisoners made a rush for the point indicated, of course all the guards who retained their arms—and that was nearly all of them—could have opened fire upon them; but for reasons best known to themselves,

their fire was withheld. In less than five minutes from the report of the first gun, not a man who could walk was left on the ground. Hull and I struck for the nearest point of woods. I said to him, as we entered the thicket: "Let us keep as near each other as we can." We did so for a few minutes, one walking behind and as near as possible to the other, but we were unable to continue our flight in this way, as it was so dark in the thick growth of underbrush that we were compelled to move by the sense of feeling altogether, and to keep our hands before our eyes to guard against the limbs and small bushes which were constantly slapping us in our faces. We consequently separated a little, all the time talking to each other that we might know by each other's voice where we were and the direction we were taking.

The woods were filled with men, each poor wretch striving to gain a few steps in the direction of—he hardly knew where. For the first thirty minutes, men could be heard talking in every direction. The main enquiry was:

"To what regiment do you belong?"

While listening to the shouting of the men, intent upon their questions, answers, etc., Hull and I had neglected to speak to each other for perhaps five minutes, and

then when I called to him I received no answer. Finding we had become separated, I shouted at the top of my voice, but if heard and answered, I could not distinguish his voice from many others who would respond. While I was calling the name of my lost comrade, a man who was near me, although I could not see him, asked me my name, company and regiment. I told him, and he at once picked his way through the brush to where I was, and told me he belonged to a Wisconsin regiment, but formerly lived in Enosburgh, Vt. When I informed him I was from Fairfield, an adjoining town, we at once agreed to form a little party of our own. We sat down upon an old log and talked the matter over. His name was Orange Ayers, a man about thirty years old. As soon as I made up my mind that Comrade Hull and I were not likely to accompany each other during that night at least, I made the proposition to my newly-found friend that if he would travel very slowly, I would endeavor to stay with him until the following day, and if by that time my bare feet should fail to stand the rough usage to which they would be exposed, he might go on and leave me.

He accepted my offer, and at the same time told me not to build any air castles founded upon hopes of liberty,

as in all probability we would be safely lodged within the new stockade inside the next twenty-four hours; and explained that it would be almost impossible for us to make our way through to our own lines. In the first place, we knew nothing of the geographical points of the country we must pass through. We could not tell North from South, excepting what we might learn from the stars, and those celestial orbs were refusing to guide us, their bright rays being cut off by the dark clouds hanging over, and in their way, shutting out from the poor wanderer's heart the last spark of comfort that might have been derived from their beauty.

My feet had become somewhat hardened by exposure to sun, air, heat and cold, and although constant contact with stones, sticks, briars and brambles caused intense suffering, it was trifling compared to what it would have been had my feet been protected by shoes during my imprisonment previous to this pedestrian trial for liberty. A little rain fell at intervals during the entire night, and if we halted for a few moments' rest, our bodies would become so chilled that it was with difficulty we resumed our march. My comrade was much better clothed than I was, as he had been a prisoner but three and a half

months and his clothing was not taken from him when he fell into the enemy's hands, as mine had been. His shoes, though considerably the worse for wear, were worth more than their weight in gold, as my comrade said the following morning. I did not have clothes enough on me for a gun wad; what little there was left of the trousers and shirt which I had constantly worn for the past eight months, night and day, only partially covered my limbs. I remember making the remark during the night that it would not be a difficult thing for the hounds to follow us, as my feet and knees were bleeding so freely from the scratches and bruises they were all the time receiving. We reasoned that there would not be a thorough search made before morning, as no rebel would be foolish enough to enter that dark and dismal forest until light appeared, so we had but little to fear of being disturbed except by the reptiles with which the woods abounded. As often as every hour I would call the name of Comrade Hull as loudly as I could. The first part of the night quite a number would answer me, but toward morning no one would respond to my cry, from which I inferred that the men were becoming further separated. Probably some

had given out, while others who were stronger were far out of hearing in advance. We moved just fast enough to keep from suffering with the cold. Had my clothes been as good as my comrade's, we might have curled up under some tree top and obtained a little rest and sleep, but as it was, we moved on together talking of home and what the future had in store for us. Oftimes during this long-to-be-remembered night of pain and suffering, we would start for a moment and the beating of our hearts could almost be heard as a hare or some other small animal would leap from his lair and bound away in the darkness.

"What would our friends in the far away North say could they behold us in this dismal swamp, struggling against such discouraging prospects of gaining our liberty?"

These and many other useless questions were asked to break the monotony of that dreadful night, until the first welcome rays of light told us that one more night had passed, although our suffering had been by far greater than upon any other night since our incarceration. We could say we had passed one night with no guard except the all-seeing eye of Him who watches over us in freedom

and bondage, in sickness and in health, and against whom prison walls or the gates of the prison Hell cannot prevail. Never did the light of day look so beautiful, and never was it more thankfully received than it was on the 21st day of September, 1864. We could judge nothing of the distance we had travelled. During the night we crossed a small stream, not wide enough to prevent our stepping over it, but the depth we found to be about three feet. We had proof of this, as we both stepped in together. There are many of these small sluggish streams in Georgia and South Carolina, which flow so lazily through those swampy lands that their course can hardly be discerned. After it had become fairly light we seated ourselves upon an old log and made a breakfast of about a half pound of corn bread which Ayres had wrapped in an old rag he had taken from his pocket. This we relished, although it was made of coarse, unsifted corn meal and water, without salt. The only trouble was the scarcity of the article.

As our present location was swampy and wet, we decided to move around until we could find a rise of ground which would be a more agreeable camping place until night. We did not consider it advisable to travel during

the day, as we were so near the prisons and so many escaped prisoners were swarming the country that we reasoned we were likely to meet with a searching party at any moment. We moved about a fourth of a mile and found what we considered as good a place as we would be liable to find, when we heard the bark of a dog. We knew by the sound it was not the howl of a bloodhound, so we at once made up our minds to reconnoitre a little, for perchance we might hear or see something to our advantage. As we moved carefully along in the direction from which the sound came, we saw an opening through the trees, and proceeding around the outskirts of the woods, we discovered a large farm house surrounded by a number of negro cabins. We at once selected a position from which we obtained a commanding view of the dwellings, and here we waited and watched for any move of their occupants. We had not long to wait, for in a few moments an old negro woman came out of one of the cabins with a basket on her head and one in each hand and proceeded directly toward us. When she had approached to within a few rods of our hiding place, she halted near a small pile of chips and began to fill her basket. For a few moments we did not know what course



to pursue. I finally made the proposition to my comrade that I should fall back into the thicket a few steps, while he—the sight of his wardrobe not being so likely to create a panic among the negroes—might make himself known to any of the colored people whom he could see around the premises, and at the same time endeavor to obtain any article of food or wearing apparel that he could appropriate to our own special use. I could particularly appreciate the clothing, let it come as it might; in fact, I had become so destitute of clothing I could not approach a house without causing the inmates, either black or white, to flee from me in fright. For this reason, if for no other, I needed the clothing more than the food, though we were both suffering from hunger. Cautiously stepping from the thicket and looking around to make sure that the old negro was the only person in sight, and that one of the cabins would hide him from view should the people in the big house be up and astir, he said:

“Aunty, have you seen anything of a stray mule around here?”

The old woman rose to her feet and placed her hands before her face for a moment, and then clasping them

together exclaimed: "O Lor, Massa, dint you-uns scar dis ole nigger!"

"Don't be frightened, Aunt; I am a friend and want to talk to you for a few moments," he said. He beckoned to her to come near him so she could understand what he had to say, and so she could not be seen by any one who might be looking in that direction, and then told her he was a Yankee soldier, fighting to free the slaves, and unless she could give him food and clothing for his sick comrade, he must die in the woods, thus eliciting her sympathy in every way he could. This was the first time she had seen a live Yankee, and her curiosity had been gratified and her fears allayed. She returned to her cabin, but not before she had expressed her admiration for a Yankee "Soger" by the repeated exclamations:

"Is you-uns a real Yankee soger? "O Lor! O Lor! save us!" "You-uns ain't so ugly as we-uns spects you was, and no horns either." "O Lor! O Lor!"

Such were the words of the poor ignorant creature as she returned to her humble cottage, with the Christian determination to divide her scanty allowance with an unfortunate fellow being; an allowance which her aristocratic owners would deprive us of. Yea, they were en-

deavoring to take from us that which God hath made dearest to mankind—his life. In a few moments the old negro woman returned with “hoe cake,” eight or ten sweet potatoes, a small piece of bacon, also a few rags from which your humble servant at once made a selection sufficient to greatly improve his wardrobe. After I had bandaged my feet and legs with pieces of the old worn-out garments, using the old coat sleeves for leggings, I considered myself in better condition than at any time during my imprisonment, although I was yet lame from the wounds I had received seven months before. But I was nowise so badly crippled as I had thought the past night would cause me to be. We at once set out intent upon selecting a camping ground for the day, in as safe a quarter as we could find, as we did not think it prudent to allow ourselves to be seen by either black or white people more than was actually necessary. We made our way around this plantation, and into another large tract of timber land on the opposite side. After travelling some two miles, we made a halt and selected a wind-fall of trees for our resting place. Here we were entirely hidden from view. From the old colored woman we had

obtained a few matches, with her assurance that the "suffer" (sulphur) "is mity near gone." As near as she could "reckon" we were "a right smart distance from where they were making a new stockade for Yankees."

## CHAPTER XII.

We reasoned that the distance was about three miles. After gathering what dry leaves and moss we could from beneath the old logs and fallen trees, we made us a bed that would have been considered "A. No. 1" had we owned it in Andersonville, or could we have retired with no fear of being roused by bloodhounds. In this place we remained undisturbed until night, when we again took up our march under circumstances of more favorable appearance than those of the past twenty-four hours. For one thing we had provisions, and although they were poor, they were sufficient to sustain life for the next twenty-four hours, and would enable us to retain for a while what little strength we had left, yet we could easily have eaten them all for our supper and retired with no danger of our rest being disturbed by the nightmare, and for the time being my limbs were partially protected. We had a few matches, and the dark clouds which had hidden the sun, moon and stars for the past two days and nights, casting a gloom over our already forlorn situation, had passed

away ; and as darkness came on, the stars one by one came out, filling the canopy of Heaven with their beauty, and the poor wandering soldiers' hearts with gratitude. We traveled this night without molestation, and rested the next day without hearing or seeing anything of other prisoners or of the rebel scouting parties which we knew were scouring the country in search of runaways. That night we took the North Star for our guide, and set out in a northerly direction, avoiding all highways and conspicuous places, where guards were most likely to have been posted. It was about twelve o'clock when we came to a small stream which was fordable, although the water came nearly to our arm-pits in mid-stream. Soon after passing this stream, we were startled by a voice directly in front of us, and a challenge was given :

“Halt, who comes there?”

What to do or what to say to this sudden interruption was, for a moment, beyond our comprehension. We at once fell back a few paces under cover of some trees and asked each other, “What is to be done?” Not receiving an answer, the challenger repeated his challenge. The river cut off our retreat in the direction we had come, so we grasped at the only chance left us and returned to the

river bank, which was quite high and steep at this point, and proceeded down stream, hoping in this way to elude those who had so unexpectedly barred our way. As we believed, "discretion is the better part of valor," we retreated down stream as fast as we could, until we came upon a squad of five men a few feet of us. They were standing upon the bank, and again one of the party asked :

"Who goes there?"

As we must now say something, my comrade answered :

"A friend."

"Advance friend, and give us a piece of doger" (corn bread).

As this was said, we heard a low laugh among them and we knew we were among friends. These men proved to be escaped prisoners and all belonged to a Michigan cavalry regiment. They knew but little more of the other escaping men than we did. From where they had been in hiding during the previous day, they had heard several challenges given and quite a number of shots fired. This was indisputable evidence that the Rebs were making every effort to recapture us, and there was not a shadow of doubt that the poor starving Yankees would

exert themselves to the utmost to retain their liberty as long as possible.

Our new comrades were without any kind of food and had nothing since they had started on this "trust luck journey," as one of our party called it. Trusting in God for our next mouthful of food, we divided what we had into seven equal parts. We left the main road and stopped to rest for a few moments and decide whether it would be advisable to keep together or to separate. It was finally decided to keep together for the remainder of the night and the following day, and should fortune favor us until the next night, we would again separate. Again we slowly moved along, keeping as near each other as possible. Some of the way we travelled in the fields, and all the time kept a lookout for anything we might run across that could be converted into food. Slowly we picked our way along, until about three o'clock in the morning, when we came in sight of a large farm house surrounded by several outbuildings. After holding a short consultation among ourselves, we decided that two of our number should reconnoitre the premises and that if they could find anything in the provision line, we would borrow it until we should come that way again. One of the Michigan



fellows and I were detailed for the business, while the other five were to keep in the immediate vicinity of the dwellings in case their services should be needed. Thinking we might find some sweet potatoes on some piece of ground under cultivation, finding nothing in the garden, we looked for a smoke house. This we soon found, but the next thing was to find what was inside that we needed. The people, not expecting us, had not even left an axe, bar or any other tool that we could substitute for a key. We looked around among the negro quarters and found an old axe and a small iron kettle at one of the cabin doors. We at once proceeded to use the axe in such a way that it made us masters of the situation in a very few moments. We borrowed a small ham and about ten pounds of bacon, and while we were endeavoring to arrange things around the smoke house to obliterate as much as possible the proof of our visit, we heard the report of a rifle on the opposite side of the house. Notwithstanding this shot was not meant for us, we did not wait to find out whom it might be who were having such marked attention paid them at that time of night, but with the smoked meat and the little iron kettle we made our way, as quickly as we could, to the edge of the woods,

where we were to meet our comrades. As we approached the place designated, we saw our five friends making their way to the same point as fast as possible. We were not long in learning the cause of the shot we heard while we were at the smoke house. Three of the five comrades who were left on the reserve, while the Michigan man and myself were rifling the smoke house, had formed another foraging party and were examining the hen house, when they were suddenly apprised of the fact that their presence was of an annoying nature. At least they imagined such to be the case when a minie ball whizzed by them from one of the windows, but they had already secured three or four heavy chickens, which they were very careful not to lose. We at once held a hasty consultation and concluded we had better get away from there as soon as we could. We did not believe that the shot was fired by any inmate of the house, but made up our minds it would naturally be known for miles around that the country was full of escaped prisoners. This fact we thought would so frighten the inhabitants they would have a safeguard placed over house and property, until the escaped prisoners had been recaptured or had passed out of that vicinity; and most likely it was one of these guards who fired. We

again pushed on through the woods, endeavoring to place as great a distance as possible between us and the farm house before light. We walked as fast as we could for perhaps three-quarters of a mile, and just as day was dawning we emerged from the woods into a large field. As there were no buildings in sight, we hastened on across this field and into another large body of woods. Here we arranged as comfortable quarters for ourselves as we could. We divided our little squad into three reliefs and allowing the seventh man to act as sergeant of the guard, we posted two men, one on each side, about twenty rods from us to keep a lookout, so that we should not be taken by surprise. While the first relief was standing (about two hours as near as we could judge), the rest of us built a fire under an old root to hide the smoke as much as possible. After we had broiled and boiled enough chickens, ham and bacon for our breakfast, we cooked what remained, and when we separated, it was equally divided. We took turns watching and sleeping during the day. As soon as dark we resumed our march, and although we were foot sore and lame, we felt thankful we had up to this time escaped the many difficulties we had expected would present themselves during this our almost hopeless

push for freedom. About midnight the howling of the dreaded bloodhounds was plainly heard in the distance. As the noise came from an easterly direction, we reasoned they were not on our track, for, as near as we could judge, we had most of the time been travelling north. After we had listened to the brutes for some thirty minutes, their howls ceased, and we made up our minds that someone had been recaptured and that perhaps when the brutal man-hunters ceased their noise some poor suffering form was being torn by their cruel fangs. Soon after this we sat down upon the grass at the edge of a small field and partook of a midnight supper, and although it consisted wholly of boiled ham, it was preferable to our third part of a pint of corn meal, such as had been our allowance for the past seven months. This being the fourth night we had been on the march, some of us could with difficulty stand upon our feet, for they had become very tender and sore. One fellow had a half worn out pair of boots; cutting the legs off, he gave them to his comrade, who by cutting them a little and using elm bark in place of a "waxed end," in a very short time had a very good protection for his feet.

It was drawing toward the close of the fourth night when our little party separated. We set out in nearly the same direction, they bearing a little to the left and Ayers and I a little to the right. We all considered this the wiser course, although the following day when my comrade and I were curled up under an old fallen tree top in a dark and dismal South Carolina swamp, I said I really wished we had all kept together. This was a long dreary day for us; we had but little food, and I was suffering from the many wounds I had received upon my nearly nude feet, legs and arms. I suffered much more physical anguish than my comrade, as his clothing partially protected him from the many sharp-pointed sticks, stones, briars and stubbles along the route.

As yet, we had come in sight of no villages and but a few farm houses. The fourth night, to add to our discomfort, the clouds hid the stars and moon that for the past two nights had gladdened our hearts with their luster. On, on, through the darkness and solitude of the night we must wend our way. We stumbled along as best we could, falling against rocks and over logs, with nothing for company but the barking of a distant watch

dog, the fluttering of a frightened bird, or the noise of some animal as it bounded away in the darkness. The intense pain in my injured limbs became almost unbearable. I told my comrade once during the night I thought I must give up, and he must leave me and go on alone. He would not listen to this, but gave me all the encouragement he could, proposing to find as comfortable a place for me as possible, and while I was resting he would scout around and endeavor to obtain food and return to me. Fearing, however, that the hounds would come upon me in my helpless condition, and very well knowing the condition I would be in, if I rested and allowed my muscles to relax, I exerted both mental and physical strength to their utmost and kept up until morning. As soon as dawn we fell back into the woods some little distance from the fields, and selecting a good place for a camping ground gathered dry moss and boughs and in a short time constructed a very respectable bed. We made a breakfast of about one-half pound of boiled ham. This was all the provisions we had left, and Ayers suggested that I should remain where I was while he tried his luck by daylight in hunting for food. As he left me that morning, fearing something would prevent his returning, I remarked that

if he should reach Florence within the next twenty-four hours, he could say that if my presence was required they would be compelled to send some kind of a conveyance for my use. It did not seem quite so hard to remain in the woods alone in the day time, as it would have seemed in the night, but by day or night it was lonely enough. I can assure you that the danger incident to travelling in the woods in an unknown country, hungry, foot-sore and lame, in constant fear of being hunted down like wild beasts, and that by savage bloodhounds, was not the only misery that constantly beset our perilous undertaking while traversing these dark and dismal swamps. We were all the time in danger of running across some of the poisonous reptiles that exist in and around these places. While standing with my bare feet upon an old log in the darkness of the night, I would often imagine I could feel it move under me, and that I was standing upon the back of a monstrous alligator; or that while apparently standing upon some moss-covered stick or limb, it would prove to be a huge snake preparing to strike its poisonous fangs into my unprotected limbs.

It was nearly mid-day; I had formed in my mind many difficulties and misfortunes that had befallen my

brave and noble comrade, when looking in the direction of a noise made by the breaking of a twig, I saw him looking around in search of me. He had not been particular in noting the spot where he left me, consequently had been searching for me for the past two hours or more. He informed me of what he considered our good luck. While in search of a farm house he came upon an old negro in the woods. He was loading wood on a cart and with a dejected looking mule was hauling it to a farm house about a half mile distant. At first the old man seemed somewhat frightened at the sudden appearance of a stranger, but after Ayers talked to him a while and told him who he was, the old man told him all about the owner of the small farm where he belonged, and his family, and promised to assist us all he could as soon as dark that night. Ayres procured no food, but the old negro had promised to meet us and provide us with something to eat and with shelter until my wounded feet should become healed so I could walk. We talked the matter over during the day, and decided to run the risk of accepting the kind offer, although it was quite a risk to run. I do not think my comrade would have accepted the hospitality of our colored friend, had it not been for my helpless condi-



tion; but not wanting to leave me to the mercy of the wild beasts, or bloodhounds, he would take his chances with me, and together we would escape or again realize the horrors of rebel cruelty. About one hour after dark we met the old negro at the appointed place. He was not a slave, but his wife and children were born and reared in slavery, and he lived with and worked for the man who owned them. At this time the owner and proprietor was a lieutenant in the Confederate Army. His son, 12 years of age, and daughter of ten, with the mother, were away on a visit, and were not expected home for a week or ten days. This was surely in our favor, and if the negroes could be trusted we were all right until the needed rest could be obtained. The Southern slave possessed the characteristics of a child. The child may commit any petty offense unknown to the parent, but when that parent demands of the erring one the whole truth, and that demand is made under the uplifted rod of correction, the desired result is at once obtained. Thus our safety in a great measure depended upon the intellectual development of those under whose guardianship we were for a few hours to place ourselves.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Should any man, especially a soldier, demand of a slave a true statement as to what he might have seen or heard regarding any escaped prisoners, and accompany that demand with a threat or perchance a blow or a kick, the chances were that the negro would at once reveal all he knew about the prisoners and their whereabouts. But we must run all chances, and I must here acknowledge that my comrade accepted these risks entirely on my account. Had he been alone, he would in all probability have rested only during the day and moved on north as fast as possible at night, though in any event his chances of making his way through to our lines were not very encouraging. I fully appreciated his kindness to me, for had he left me in the condition I was in, I could have done nothing but throw myself upon the mercy of the people, and the result of that can be easily comprehended. We were at once conducted to the negro's cabin. We saw arrangements had been made for our reception and safety. There were about twenty slaves on the plantation, but our

benefactor, whose name was Johnson, his wife and five children were to be the only members of the colored population who should know of our presence. My comrade and I were told by the negroes that we were to occupy the upper part of the cabin. In this room were two rude cots; one of them stood in one corner, and was partially hidden by a couple of old blankets hung from the rafters. This cot we were to occupy for the night, unless some rebel soldier or patriotic citizen should discover our peaceful abode. Adjoining the cabin was a small wood shed. There was no chamber in the shed, but from one rafter to another were nailed pieces of boards and on these braces or overlays were three or four boards placed side by side. By lifting up a short board hung upon leather hinges on the gable end of the house, a man could crawl through and out on to these boards and hide himself entirely from view, and no one would suspect that anyone was lying on these, so near the peak of the roof.

These arrangements had been made by the negro and his wife after Ayers had met him in the morning, and the windows of the cabin had been darkened. A warm supper awaited us, and doubtless they believed all we said regarding our appetites, as the five or six black faces were

turned toward us, while the hot corn bread, fried bacon and sweet potatoes disappeared from the board as by magic. We learned that no prisoners had been seen, but that during the past few days two squads of cavalry and one of infantry had passed. All had inquired about fugitives. They instructed the negroes to tell their young master upon his return to keep a sharp lookout for Yanks and report to headquarters at Florence, bringing any whom he, or any of the citizens of the surrounding country, might capture. At the same time, they told them not to feed any Yankee, for after eating his food a Yankee would murder a black man merely for the fun of it. This was policy, of course, for the Confederates, as they knew that the escaped prisoners must call on the colored people for assistance, as there was not one white man or woman in a thousand who would not betray the soldier should starvation drive him to their doors. It could be plainly seen that a free born negro's intellectual abilities were superior to his brother in bondage, although he was misused and despised because he was not a slave. Then having been born and brought up among slaves, his wife and children slaves, he really knew but little of freedom except that he was born free and that according to law the white

man could not sell him or inflict punishment upon him. But there was small chance for a free born negro to elicit the sympathy of the people or obtain justice in the courts on account of abuse inflicted upon him by even the most degraded of the white population; but one of the other slaves entered Johnson's cabin during the evening, and he was the eldest man on the plantation, having been born the property of the present owner's grand-parents, on the same farm, eighty years before. The other inhabitants of the quarters had been told that "Mrs. Johnson was mighty 'flicted dis ere ebnin" and could'nt be "sturbed," and our old friend chuckled as he informed us of what appeared to him a shrewd device to prevent the others from entering his cabin during our stay. The old man who called was a ruling spirit in the church, among the slaves of this and adjoining plantations, and none doubted the good man's power to heal the sick, or stay the onward course of the blood-hounds by his prayers. About 9 o'clock, Uncle Ebin made the proposition that, "if Brud-der Johnson has no jections and will jine, I will sist dese gemmen wid a short season of prayer;" and as the bright light from the blazing logs in the old Dutch fire-place shone upon those seven or eight black faces, ranging in

years from eighteen to eighty, so earnestly invoking Heaven's blessings upon those whom they believed to be the friends of their race, we could not help but think, that if the prayers of the righteous availeth much, they doubtless damaged the cause of secession materially that evening. We retired to rest about ten o'clock, but not until we had taken a bath and my wounded feet had been carefully bandaged with soft cloths well saturated with coon's oil, of which we were given abundance.

I said to my comrade, who seemed to be interested in the proceedings, that if there was any virtue in kind words and coon's oil, I must be a great deal benefited.

The following morning we awoke greatly refreshed. After partaking of a coarse but substantial breakfast, we retired to the same room where we had slept, and there passed the day of September 24th. My injured feet were much better, and the prospects of making a good march the following night were favorable.

The negroes were doing all they could for our comfort, and the future was beginning to look bright, when suddenly our hopes were dashed upon the hidden reefs, and apparently our chances of longer being free moral agents were at an end.

The old negress rushed into the house with the exclamation, "O Lor sabe us, dey is comin, O Lor sabe dese poo gemmens," etc.

As we looked down into the lower part of the cabin and saw the good, true hearted old creature wringing her black hands as she paced the floorless cabin, there was no doubting the fidelity of this abused friend of the Union.

Looking through a hole in the roof we saw about twenty rebel cavalrymen about thirty rods from us slowly marching toward the dwelling. In front of them were eight or ten escaped prisoners, picking their way painfully along the sides of the muddy road.

At a glance the situation was taken in, and the old negro Johnson thrust his wooly head through the hole in the floor, where a ladder filled the place of stairs, and said in a half whisper, "Go on dem boards in de shed."

We were not long in making our way through the gable end of the house and onto the boards.

The squad of cavalry rode up to the Eastman homestead, and asked of the young negroes gathered around them, where their master was. After being informed by the youngsters that "Ole Massa is in de war, young

Massa is a right smart distance away, and that Misser Johnson knode jes wher he be," the troop at once advanced to our cabin. We heard the officer ask our old friend if he had seen any —— run away Yankees "looking like these beauties here," indicating the poor fellows in front of him, whose miserable condition should have brought a feeling of shame and disgrace rather than of amusement to him and to all like him who had been instrumental in inflicting such cruelties as our brave Union soldiers had been subjected to at their hands.

"Dar no one pass in de daytime sure, but old Tows make a great fuss in de night; may be dey pass den."

"You could easily ascertain by examining your hen coop, replied the dashing Lieutenant, and all the rebels laughed at what they considered his witty remark.

Some of the soldiers dismounted, and while the Lieutenant was talking with the old negro, two men stepped under the little shed, and one of them cut the tail from a coon skin that was nailed to the wall and stepping back, attached it to the bridle on the side of his horse's head. My comrade and I hugged the boards that merely hid us from view within four feet of their heads.



"Bless de Lor deys gone," we heard the old negress say, and we again crawled back into the chamber. In five minutes there were eight or ten of the negro's family gathered around us, congratulating us on our lucky escape.

How thankful these poor people appeared to be, but of course they did not consider how many such narrow escapes we would have before we reached the Union lines, should fortune favor our endeavor.

The old man Johnson had found me an old pair of shoes, and Auntie had rigged me a pair of feeting and several other articles very essential to a soldier's existence.

As night approached and we were again thinking of moving on, I found to my sorrow, that I was unable to wear the shoes they had so kindly furnished me, as my feet had swollen so as to prevent my putting them on. I proposed that we should move on, and I would carry my shoes in my hands until I was able to wear them, but my comrade, having seen eleven more summers than I, regarded his judgment a little better, and he thought we should remain where we were until I should be able to march. Of course I would abide by his

decision, as he had already proved himself a friend in need and a friend indeed.

Although there had been one scouting party there that day, that was no proof that there would not be more, for in all probability they would continue to patrol all main travelled roads, keeping up a vigilant search until they had recaptured as many as possible of the escaped prisoners.

Having decided not to relinquish our claim upon our kind friends' hospitality for at least another twenty-four hours, we made ourselves as comfortable as possible. The old negro, who so earnestly prayed for our speedy deliverance and called down upon the Southern Confederacy Egyptian darkness, called upon us in the afternoon, with two or three books and a couple of Richmond papers. One of the papers was not a week old. He informed us he "slyed dem out of de big house." The papers gave us detailed accounts of Sherman's moves, and although there was no benefit to be derived from them, yet they were a source of pleasure as we had not seen a newspaper for seven months or taken a book in our hands, except a Bible, for the same length of time. Toward evening we were asked by our benefactors, if

we would object to eight or ten of the older ones of the negro plantation, with five or six from an adjoining farm, holding a prayer meeting at the cabin. The old man Johnson and Uncle Ebin assured us that no one would be invited except those who could be trusted. After charging them to confide in no one but those who should be present, we gave our consent.

Soon after dark fifteen of these poor slaves were assembled at the cabin, for the purpose of beholding a live Yankee, and to give us the benefit of their prayers. After feasting their eyes upon us for about half an hour, and in an undertone making occasional remarks to each other, one venerable man, a pillar of the Colored Methodist Church, in his enthusiasm invoked every imaginable blessing upon the Union and its defenders, and every evil upon its opponents.

Among other things I recorded as a feature of this inpromptu prayer meeting, was the petition of a venerable prototype of Uncle Jake, who appeared to be a ruling spirit in the party.

## CHAPTER XIV.

He sent up his supplications to Heaven as follows:

“O great and ’telligent Lor, look down on dis ere meetin’ dis ere night! ’Sist dese gemmen who has fled from rebel’fliction. Dey wants to git frou to de Norf, and we ax you sisence. O Lor! Gide em in de paff of life and may it lead to de promise lan. Bamfoozle de hounds and may def cut off dare cent. Help dese gemmen frou all danger, and on to tudder side of Jordan. Look upon Massa Lincum in a particlar manner if it be dy holy will; and may de year of jubelee come and de rebs turn up dare toes. Oh Lor! Hover over de sick and flicted. Oh Lor! bless all de generals of de Norf, and bless all de por sogers dat am chained up in de souf; bless all de colored people who is groun down in de dust. Help dese gemmen right smart; life everlasting. Amen.”

This and much more was listened to by the whole audience and responded to with prolonged “Amens!”

It was nearly midnight when the invited people dispersed, each going to his humble abode, but not before

they had been cautioned by Johnson to keep our presence a secret.

During the following twenty-four hours nothing transpired worthy of note. At the expiration of that time comrade Ayers and I prepared to leave the Christian people whose hospitality we had shared, again to push on toward "The land of the free and the home of the brave." As this sustaining thought drew us near home and loved ones, it elicited the last spark of energy, and encouraged and strengthened both soul and body. We bade farewell to our colored friends, and with two days' rations of corn bread and bacon, and the blessings of those who had so kindly aided us in the hour of need, we again started toward the North Carolina state line.

We had learned all we could from the slaves regarding the geographical points of the country, but as their knowledge was decidedly limited in this respect, it was but little use to ask for any information.

We travelled in the woods until after midnight, when we came out and made our way to a farm house, and filled a small wooden bottle or keg that we had procured of Madame Johnson, with milk. The family hav-

ing retired for the night, we had no trouble in finding the milk room, which was erected over a cold spring near the house. This was a picnic, as my comrade called it, that we had not expected. After this, we kept in the fields and highways until nearly daylight, when we again took up our quarters in the woods. In a secluded spot, thickly covered with trees, vines and underbrush, we made a small fire beneath the body of a large tree that had turned up by the roots. It partly protected us from view and would hide any smoke and steam that might arise. We remained in this place all day, having little fear of being discovered except by the hounds.

The following night, as we were slowly making our way along the border of a large wood, we were suddenly confronted by two men, who stepped out of the woods on our left. One of them raised a gun to his face and asked, "Say fellers, which will you-uns have, a handful of buckshot and slugs mixed with your inards, or pull up and tell us who you be, and what in the d—— you want round yeah?"

The bright moon revealed two men of medium size, and as bad looking men as one would meet in a day's journey. They were about forty or forty-five years of age,

and wore butternut colored clothes with their old slouch wool hats turned up in front. Their faces were unshaved, and their hair long. The impression they made was anything but prepossessing. In military form we saluted our challengers, and in reply to their inquiry said:

"We are teamsters from the army and are on our way home near Raleigh, N. C."

Each of our captors carried a large rifle or shotgun, and from leather belts around their waists hung revolvers and dirk knives. One of them carried two heavy revolvers and the other one.

After listening to our unreasonable story, they told us they were employed by the government (Confederate, we supposed they meant), to act as detectives in picking up deserters. After talking with them a short time, we were convinced they were not soldiers, for had they been, they would have cornered us up in our story, as we knew nothing of the whereabouts of any part of the Confederate army, or of the country we were in. In all probability they had not thought of detectives or deserters until we told them we were teamsters from the army; they then most likely thought we had deserted. Finding we had

no arms, they ordered us to be seated and the two backwoodsmen, for as such they talked and appeared to be, drew a little to one side and in an undertone conversed with each other for five or ten minutes. While we were alone, comrade Ayers and myself passed our opinion on the two mysterious characters. We had more fear of them than we would have had of soldiers. Ayers believed they were outlaws, moonshiners, horse thieves or criminals of some kind escaping justice by hiding in the mountainous wilds of that desolate country. They did not appear to challenge any of our statements, which led us to believe they were fully as ignorant as their ungrammatical, outlandish language indicated. After resting for thirty minutes or so, one of the men ordered us to follow them, saying as he did so, "We-uns must look into you-uns cases, and if you-uns prove to be deserters it will go mighty hard on ye." Ayers did the talking for us, and explained that we were not enlisted men, but simply hired teamsters, and our clothing becoming the worse for wear, we had started for home for clothing and such necessities as we could not procure at the front. They listened, but apparently took little stock in what he said.



After passing across a large field, we again entered the woods and in what appeared to be a path on the banks of a small stream, we marched for two or three hours before a halt was made. We then stopped only long enough to take a lunch, which our captors had with them in a small bag or sack one of them carried on his shoulder. They gave each of us a piece of corn bread and a small piece of meat, of what kind we never knew. Of our own small amount of food we said nothing.

These men appeared to have met with a disappointment, as they often spoke about another party that had failed to meet them. Several times during our rest they drank from a small keg or canteen, which each carried. We were invited to partake of the contents of these old-fashioned bottles, and as we declined with thanks, one or the other of our captors would make some joking remark as "They's mighty polite, you-uns don't take to jack, perhaps you-uns are preachers," and many other intended jokes were made at our expense. They gave Ayers some tobacco and then, when we resumed our march, he asked what they were going to do with us. "Keep ye till we-uns find out who ye is," was the reply. In this way we moved slowly along until nearly morning,

when we came to a small clearing at the foot of a mountain, which could be plainly seen by the bright light of the full moon, which was gradually sinking behind the mountain peak.

In the center of this small aperture was situated a flat roofed log hovel, and from its roof could be seen a small wave of smoke slowly winding its way heavenward, which convinced us that this rustic structure, situated so far from any other habitation, was the abode of human beings. As we came near the shanty, a flickering light was discernible in a rude fire-place, which could be seen through a small window made in the logs near the door. One of the men, whose appearance indicated that the contents of his little wooden bottle consisted of something stronger than water, made a circular tour of the premises before a word was spoken. He then commenced tapping lightly upon the door, but as he did not appear to arouse the inmates, the blows were increased until a voice from the inside, apparently that of a female, was heard to say: "Jim, Jim, thar's someone at the door," whereupon the muffled voice of a man was heard, as though his head was covered with a blanket; then an oath and another voice, and in a few moments two or three men were heard calling to each

other to get up. The continual barking of a dog, mingled with the oaths of the inmates, made the unexplored interior of that establishment appear to Ayers and myself anything but attractive, and our opinion of the place and its occupants was not in the least improved by our admittance.

The floor or ground was covered with some kind of hay, which was used for bedding; a few blankets, ragged quilts and old garments, together with four or five small boxes, were mixed with the hay. Upon our entrance a light was made by lighting a rag placed in a small iron basin filled with grease, which sat on an old rickety table, in company with two or three bottles, tin cups, dirk knives, corn bread, clay pipes and black molasses used to sweeten the liquor. In the far corner was a haggish looking female, sitting in her nest, with a black clay pipe in her mouth. An old piece of blanket covered her shoulders, and her long, uncombed hair encircled her pinched and dirty face, making a picture not soon forgotten. Three men, whose dress and outward appearance bespoke their true character, met us with:

“Who in h—— you-uns got here?”

They were all under the influence of liquor, and conditions indicated a night of revelry and debauch, which had subsided but a short time previous to our arrival. These drunken ruffians gathered around us and endeavored to amuse themselves by making abusive and insulting remarks to us, and having no idea how it would terminate I thought to myself, what I could not say to my comrade, "Give me Andersonville, Libby or almost any place rather than this."

We were soon in possession of the knowledge that one of the men who had made us prisoners was the leader of the gang. The woman was the wife of one of the men whom we found in the shanty. This was not their permanent abode; their headquarters were further on, and these four persons had been waiting the past twenty-four hours the return of their comrades, who came with us, and some other person or persons who had disappointed them. These and a few other facts we gathered from the drunken and disgusting conversation carried on between them, together with the fact that as soon as it was light they would set out for the home of which the old woman had spoken several times, she being the nearest sober of the lot, yet not very sober at that.

These people were all armed and not badly clothed, but exceedingly dirty and vile. Soon after our arrival the bottles were replenished with apple jack or some other kind of liquor, which was taken from a large travelling bag that hung in one corner of the room, and Ayers and myself were ordered, instead of invited, to drink with the others. While we were going through the pretensions, which were not difficult, the cups being tin and the men all drunk, the woman growled out:

“What in h—— you-uns going to do wif them ragged coons?”

“Shut up, —— ye,” answered one of the gang, “they’s preachers.”

And then a loud, brutal laugh ending in a yell, was indulged in by all hands. When we looked at these people and at our surroundings, it seemed hardly possible we were among human beings. Ayers whispered to me that as they became more drunk our chances of escape would improve, and that we should keep cool and pretend to drink as often as they. About one hour after our arrival the scene was terrible. One fellow was trying to dance, when another pushed him and he fell over a box which was used for a seat. No sooner did he gain his feet than

he caught a gun which leaned against the wall, but before he could use it upon his assailant, in his drunken rage, two or three clinched him and a tussle ensued, during which the table was capsized, the kettle of oil and fire overturned into the dry hay, which instantly ignited, and, in less time than I can write it, a fire was started. One of the men kicked the burning hay, which scattered the fire the whole length of the room. The door was thrown open by Ayers, who was standing nearest it, and as he went through I followed. In a low tone he said: "Now is our time."

We joined hands as we passed out, not even stopping to put out the fire, or to see how our friends fared; we made for the woods in a way that would have placed us among the foremost in a pedestrian arena, could our movements have been witnessed by those who do not indulge too freely in apple jack. We did not speak or look back until we reached the woods, some six or eight rods distant, when we halted for a few moments and took a farewell view of the situation. We were not pursued by our captors, for as we glanced at the hovel and its occupants there was no doubting the certainty of the destruction of the former, while the latter were trying to save

the worthless shanty. The men could be plainly seen in front of the door, running, jumping, shouting and endeavoring to enter the burning hut, from which, in one minute after we left it, flames and smoke could be seen issuing from the door and cracks along its walls and roof. Appearances indicated that the woman did not escape. The few moments we watched the drunken proceedings of the outlaws convinced us that they could not save her. She was at the extreme end of the room, and there was almost instantly a blaze of fire between her and the door, which was the only avenue of escape.

"I do not think the brutes have missed us," said Ayers, "come on." The first welcome rays of light were visible in the east as we took the last look at the outlaws and their burning rendezvous, and started on our back tracks as fast as our tired limbs would permit. As soon as light, we found the trail and in a couple of hours were at the place where we ate our midnight lunch with the two men who conducted us six or eight miles to see their drunken friends, and their shanty burn.

## CHAPTER XV.

We had but little fear of being pursued, as they had no horses, and but one was in a condition to undergo a forced march, and he was tired and apparently had lots of business on hand when we last saw him. The report of two guns echoed from the surrounding woods soon after we left. To account for this, we reasoned that the guns were left in the burning shanty and were discharged by heat. Daylight revealed a well-trodden foot path, leading up a narrow, wooded valley beside a small creek or river, which proved to be the same which we, a few hours before, so reluctantly passed over in the opposite direction with two well armed outlaws as our guides. As we struck the trail and satisfied ourselves that we were right, we hastened along as fast as we were able. We dare not leave this trail until we had arrived in the vicinity of the place where we met the men who had, for reasons known only to themselves, started us on a journey which might have ended in death, had not misfortune overtaken them previous to the consummation of their plans. From the



ignorance exhibited by these people, and from information elicited from them during their drunken controversy, we were led to think that this gang and others, who were secluded from the world in their mountainous retreats, were-either moonshiners, men who were hiding from justice after committing crimes, or who had chosen this mode of living in preference to being conscripted into the army. Believing the first supposition to be correct, we felt our lives and safety depended upon our ability to escape them and we proposed to do it if possible. As I have said, we dare not leave the trail in this vast wilderness, as we feared we might get lost, hence we must keep in the vicinity of habitations. As for being lost, we were that already, and had been since we left Florence, as we knew nothing of the country we were in. About ten o'clock we came in sight of a field, and then fell back into the woods about half a mile from the trail, and there remained through the day of October 27th.

My worn feet had again become terribly sore, and as we secreted ourselves under the branches of a fallen tree and ate our last bit of food, I told my comrade that it would be impossible for me to hold out much longer without some covering for my feet. The substitute for shoes

which the negroes gave me, together with the few pounds of food, were things of the past. Ayers' shoes would last but two or three nights more; at the end of that time his feet would be exposed to the rough and stony surface of the ground. As he had not been without some kind of covering for his feet during his imprisonment, he feared that he would be unable to walk when it was gone. Soon after nightfall of the 27th we again resumed our march, foot sore, hungry and lame; and I do not in the least enlarge upon our difficulties when I say considerably discouraged. Taking the North Star for our guide, we slowly picked our way through this lonely, almost uninhabited country, until the first welcome rays of light along the eastern horizon announced the departure of one more night of suffering and the advent of another day of anxiety and adventure.

Several times during the night we came in sight of some kind of habitation, and as we cautiously approached the meagre and poverty stricken dwellings, something would prevent our making a successful attempt to obtain food. Either our presence aroused the inmates, or some lank cur would set up a howl that would turn us again to

battle with the pangs of hunger, in this our almost hopeless and helpless condition.

As we sat upon a log in a thickly wooded nook just at daybreak, Comrade Ayres, who had through the six days of hardship and suffering shown all the discretion and courage requisite for those who had placed their lives at their country's disposal, sat with downcast eyes, pondering our sad and wretched condition. He suddenly rose to his feet, nervously paced to and fro for a few minutes, and exclaimed: "My God, what are we going to do?" Seeing he was not in the usual bright and cheerful mood which had characterized him ever since our escape, and fearing over-exertion might cause illness, I answered: "Let us move on by daylight, rather than during the night, as it will be easier for us both." I then explained to him the impossibility of making our way to our lines in the condition we were in; that we had no chance to obtain food at night, and that at this season of the year nothing was growing in the fields. After thinking the matter over a few moments, he said: "You are right; we can gain nothing by these nights of hardship and suffering, and we will travel by daylight what time we have our liberty."

We rested for a couple of hours and then plodded on. We travelled in the edge of the woods for a mile or so, until we came across an old negro or mulatto working on a fence near a log cabin, which stood alone, there being no other buildings in sight. Ayers stepped out in sight, and accosted him with "Good morning, Uncle." After we had talked to him for a short time, he informed us that he and his wife were free born and worked for a man named Mason, who owned five slaves, and lived about a mile from where we were, on a small plantation. Mason or Manson was a captain in the rebel army. The negro had seen no escaped prisoners, did not know of Florence or of any town except one lying east about three miles called Brownville. He gave us some corn bread and about one-half pound of fat bacon, which made us a breakfast of which we most decidedly stood in need. About ten o'clock we came into the edge of a large field, which looked like an old and bound out plantation. It was about a mile across this field. After we had covered about one-third of the distance, we heard what we at first thought to be a bugle call, but the sound a few moments later caused a chill to pass through our emaciated bodies, as the near approach revealed the true character of our

situation. We were pursued by bloodhounds! This time it was I who asked, "What are we going to do; how can we escape?"

"By gaining the opposite side of this field, and climbing a tree before the dogs overtake us. If we fail in this, we are at the mercy of the brutes. Hasten for your life." As Ayers made this quick reply to my inquiry, we started for the point indicated. Though there were scrubby trees scattered over the field, there were none large enough for protection. Half or two-thirds of a mile is not far, but to one footsore, lame and almost exhausted by continual hardship, together with the fact that savage bloodhounds were in close pursuit, the distance seemed anything but short. We were a little more than half way across when the dogs came in sight. As I turned and looked at the yelping brutes, the blood seemed to curdle in my veins, the cold chills swept over me, and I reached for a club at my feet. As my comrade saw my motion, he pointed to the weak missile which I, as a drowning man had grasped, and said: "Drop that, drop it! If you strike they will kill us."

A few rods further on an old log fence ran across the field. As we reached this fence, which was some four feet high, the hounds were upon us. We seated ourselves side by side upon the topmost log and waited developments, which I must confess we believed would prove disastrous, if they did not terminate in death. This was the first time since our escape that the advent of rebels even would have met with a cordial welcome, but it was not the will of God that our lives should end thus. The same omnipotent hand stayed the work of the brutal man-hunters, that our emaciated bodies should not be lacerated by their cruel fangs. As they surrounded us, three or four of the pack, which consisted of eleven, sat in front of us and howled continually; others were sliding their bodies to and fro on the grass covered ground, while others were wrestling and playing with each other. We did not move hand or foot, but sat and watched the well trained brutes as they howled, barked and played, waiting the arrival of those who were following them. There was a highway running along the border of this field, at our right, and parallel with the course we were taking. Of this we knew nothing until we saw twelve rebel cavalrymen enter by this road, and ride directly to the dogs,

which instantly became quiet. The brutes lay clustered together sleeping like innocent kittens, while we were talking with the horsemen.

As the men came up, the lieutenant in command said :

“Oh! These arn’t what we are after. Good morning, fellows, where are you chaps bound?”

The teamster racket was again called into requisition but this time our questioners claimed they knew nothing of the troops to which we referred at Charleston, and had never been aware that the Confederate Government hired citizens as teamsters, and that it was not a common occurrence for their teamsters to become so destitute of clothing or to resort to Yankee rags if they did.

“Whereupon Ayres independently replied: “Lieutenant, there are many things in this world that you and I have never seen, and there are officers in our army who rank higher than you do, who are not familiar with the exact location of our large army, and if you have seen any length of service, you can not have failed to see that many of our men wear Yankee rags when they are obtainable, although it is not in accordance with the regulations to do so.”

The rebel lieutenant and his followers laughed heartily at our independence, and then said :

"Well, I am sorry to have our dogs cause you unnecessary delay, and if you are going our way we will keep you company until our respective destinations require our separation."

We thanked them kindly and moved on together. They showed no signs that we were their prisoners, neither did we. As we came to the forks of the road, some three-fourths of a mile distant, one of us said :

"Well, boys, we must leave you here," thinking that as long as a life remained we might hope, although it was a faint hope indeed.

"No, no!" exclaimed the lieutenant. Your nearest route to the State Line is the way we are going; you had best accompany us if you wish the most direct route."

As he said this, Ayres said: "No more of this nonsense. Have you Johnnies anything to eat and any tobacco about you?"

"Well, Yanks, we hav'nt much, but we will divide, as you-uns look a little gant," and we all laughed at the little farce we had been playing.



These men belonged to a Louisiana regiment and had been in the field for about three years ; therefore they did not consider it an honor to misuse prisoners, as did those galvanized brutes who were mostly militia, and who had been doing duty at the several prisons where we had been confined. They divided their rations with us, gave Ayres some tobacco, and gave us any information we requested regarding the escaped prisoners. They informed us that most of the escaped had been recaptured, and all were in the new stockade at Florence, with some two thousand who had arrived since our escape. The hounds had been on our tracks from where we made our halt and rested for an hour or so about three o'clock that morning ; therefore, we would have been taken just the same had we been travelling by night. They told us that not many had been taken by hounds, their service being called into use after most of the prisoners had been recaptured. They also informed us that the dogs were owned in or near Charleston ; that they seldom attacked a person when they overtook him, unless he showed fight, and that they were trained in this way. Then they explained how they were trained, saying that if they attacked a person and injured or killed him, the planter would be loath to hunt a run-

away slave in this way, thereby losing the value of the negro, from two hundred to one thousand dollars. This conversation was carried on while we were marching three or four miles, to an old jail or court house, where they left us. During our journey two of the men dismounted and allowed Ayres and myself to ride their horses. In this way we rode nearly the whole distance.

This court house, in one end of which was a jail, had evidently not been used since the commencement of the war, and the cob-webs, two or three feet in length, were hanging from the ceiling and a thick coat of dust covered all. We were locked in this place, and left in charge of a very old man and woman, who lived in one end of the building. Our captors and their dogs probably went in search of other unfortunates, who, like ourselves, had for six days been struggling for an almost impossible chance to gain their liberty. We remained in this place for twenty-four hours. The old people furnished us three times with a piece of corn bread and a cup of soup. Ayres called the soup "Mystery soup," the mystery being what it was made of. An old negro servant brought us our food. As he came in after our dishes and bent over to pick them up, I caught hold of the bottom of his short coat. This

unexpected move caused the old man to back away, and before I relaxed my hold upon the garment, he had backed out of it, leaving the coveted article in my possession. Knowing that this coat was of great value to me, I at once retreated out of sight with it. Soon the old lady came to the door and said the gentleman would have to give up the servant's "west-cut," whereupon Ayres immediately explained to her that I was a holy terror if the least bit excited or angered, and that the militia, if not part of Lee's army would have to be called out before I would relinquish my claim to the garment. After the good woman had become fully convinced that I was a dangerous subject and liable to explode, if I was in any way excited or angered, she said that the gentleman was more than welcome to the coat and that she was sorry it was not better. Comrade Ayres, after watching the proceedings and witnessing the old lady's childish solicitations that I should not become excited more than was absolutely necessary, laughingly remarked, as I crept from a back room wearing the garment, that this was our first attempt at hilarity since we had been in prison; and he wished the whole Confederate Government, or at least the commanders of rebel prisons, looked upon all their

captives with the same awe and dread as these apparently innocent people regarded me; but this was not to last. About noon the next day two cavalymen came to the jail and took us out.

After waiting in front of an old dilapidated hotel that was then occupied by several negroes, until after all the women and children, old men and negroes in the settlement had looked us over, we were started for Florence. Our two guards were not as friendly appearing as our mounted men-hunters of the day before, nevertheless they allowed us to rest our sore and tired limbs by riding a part of the way. They gave us a part of their rations, and laughed heartily when Ayres told them how I obtained my walking coat, as he called it, which was made of thick grey cotton. It came to my hips, the sleeves were a few inches too short, but otherwise it fitted well enough and was the chief part of my wardrobe during the remainder of my incarceration. Almost at sundown we halted at a farm house for the night. There we found two rebel soldiers with three escaped prisoners from the Fifth and Seventh Michigan Cavalry. These poor fellows had been recaptured the day before, and were three of the five men who had accompanied us for nearly two

days and nights, and who separated from us three nights before, some fifteen miles from where we now again met, under sadder circumstances. Two of their number had fallen under the deadly aim of their pursuers while striving to retain their liberty, if such it could be called, as long as possible. One was shot through the heart and died instantly, while his more unfortunate comrade received wounds, which when they were combined with the terrible suffering that inevitably awaited him, would prove fatal.

We were now about ten miles from where we were recaptured by the hounds, and twenty-three miles from Florence. We all slept together in an outbuilding near the farm house, one of the Johnnies at a time standing guard over us. The following morning the sergeant in charge obtained some corn bread and bacon for our breakfast, also a small amount to take along for our dinner. Soon after sunrise we again took up our march, and just at dark, upon the same day, the door of the new stockade was thrown open to receive five as tired, lame and foot-sore individuals as ever graced a rebel prison hell.

This was just nine days and nights from the time the break for liberty was made. I have not the power of

language to portray to the reader the anxiety, fear, hardship and suffering to which we were constantly subjected the greater part of the time during that perilous attempt to escape; therefore, I will for a moment leave him to take an external survey of this sepulchral den, while my utterly discouraged comrades and I pass inside to mingle again with that moving mass of suffering humanity, where the vermin dieth not and the fires are not built.

## CHAPTER XVI.

It was nearly dark when we entered the new stockade, and not only had all or nearly all of the escaped prisoners been recaptured and consigned to these quarters, but three or four thousand of the Andersonville prisoners had been sent here during our absence.

At this time I knew nothing of the whereabouts of Comrade Hull, and hearing from the guards that quite a number of the prisoners had been shot while trying to escape, and fearing for his safety, I at once commenced searching for him among the prisoners. As darkness came on, and there were no lights excepting an occasional small flickering blaze made by lighting a pine stick, I soon lost Comrade Ayres, and after travelling until my already tired limbs could stand it no longer, I curled up between two earth huts near the dead line and there passed my first night in the Florence stockade.

The following day I found Hull; he was not recaptured until the fourth day after his escape, therefore had been in the new pen only five days. He had experienced

hardships and narrow escapes, having been fired upon two or three times during his *vacation*, as he called it. As they were reorganizing some of the thousands, and as I had not been consigned to any detachment, I managed to get into the thousand to which Hull belonged, and we were again in the same mess, which consisted of twenty men instead of fifteen, as we had in Andersonville.

Soon after our arrival at Florence, Comrade Hull and myself concocted a little scheme which, if adroitly managed, would give an extra ration to each of us for an indefinite time. Here, as at Andersonville, the prisoners were formed in regimental order, excepting that they were called thousands and hundreds, instead of regiments and companies. Each morning the rebels would enter the stockade, count the men and call the roll. Commencing with the first thousand, they would count them and if a man was missing he must be found. If sick, he must be pointed out by the sergeant of the hundred to the rebel sergeant before the thousand would be allowed to break ranks. If a man was missing and could not be found, after standing an hour or two, the thousand would break ranks, but the whole thousand would lose their rations for the following twenty-four hours. The rules of the



prison were such, that any man being absent at roll-call, and thus throwing the thousand out of their rations, should be tied to the whipping-post, situated in the central part of the prison, and there receive as many blows—of the cat-o'-nine-tails—as the chief of police saw fit to inflict.

One morning, after our thousand—No. 4—had been counted and had broken ranks, Hull and myself conceived the idea of crossing to the opposite side of the camp and there joining another thousand, as they were that day going to reorganize or consolidate some of their thousands, where death had broken their ranks. We had no trouble in “flanking in,” as it was called, consequently Hull and Dufur of the 4th battalion and Perkins and Briggs of the 9th, drew their rations in the same little sacks, and they were eventually consumed by the two former men. Of course, we ran some risk in this “flank” movement, but the extra pint of meal that we drew each night was sufficient recompense for any little fears we might entertain in regard to consequences, if detected.

The third or fourth day after joining the ninth thousand, flour was issued instead of meal, and while Hull was drawing the rations for Perkins (himself) and Briggs

in the 9th, I was drawing for Hull and Dufur in the 4th. By exchanging one pint of flour for a half dozen small sweet potatoes, we were well provided for, at least for one day. All passed off smoothly for about eight or ten days and we began to think our chances good for living through the winter, should fortune favor us as much in obtaining something to protect us from the cold rains and winds, as it had in the provision line, when a cloud burst directly over the castle we had built in the air, and the fall thereof was not only great, but sudden.

The rebels for some reason became suspicious that they were issuing more rations than they had men, and at once decided to investigate and if possible bring to justice any starving wretch who might have the audacity in any way to seek to obtain an extra pint of provender to appease his hunger. Acting upon this resolution they at once ordered the first thousand into line, and after calling the roll and counting the men, placed a strong guard over them, and in like manner proceeded to the second thousand, instructing the guards to allow no man to step out of the ranks until the entire camp had been searched. Nos. 1 and 2 were left under guard while they were counting the third, and so on through the eleven or twelve de-

tachments, which occupied nearly half a day. When the ninth thousand and seventh hundred were counted, the rebel sergeant turned to the sergeant or corporal who had charge of that hundred and said:

“Two men absent, call the roll.”

The roll was called, and the absentees proved to be “Perkins” and “Briggs.” Search was made, but to no avail, as no one knew their place of abode; they were merely marked “absent,” and rations for No. 9 ditto. Could they for a moment have looked across the camp and at the seventh hundred of No. 4, they might have seen standing there in the ranks two rather poorly clad young men apparently *not* at ease, although they had received orders thus to stand.

There were no two men in the fourth battalion that could in all probability read each other’s minds more accurately than Hull and Dufur during the five hours they were quietly waiting in the ranks that morning. We were not the only ones who were a little anxious, although we had imagined at the time that we were alone in this flank movement; therefore, were entitled to all the credit for the generalship and honor emanating from the scheme, but this was not the case. Others were equally wise, and

this piece of strategy we had jointly and severally regarded superior to anything appertaining to our welfare, now had the appearance of being another drop added to the cup of sorrow we had already nearly drained to its bitter dregs.

That about one hundred and sixty rations more were being issued than there were men in the prison, was shown by the Johnnies "taking the census," as the boys called it. Comrade Hull and myself had slept near the gate until we met with this "financial embarrassment," but after that we moved a short distance back, where we would be less likely to be seen by those whom we had unintentionally deprived of their rations for twenty-four hours.

For nearly a week everything passed off quietly, until one day, while I was curled up over a little blaze, endeavoring to cook my meal, a man behind me said:

"Hullo Briggs, where's Perkins?"

I was on the point of giving him to understand that Hull (i. e. Perkins) was in the hospital, thinking that it was sufficient for one to suffer for trying to procure a cup of corn meal when starving, when Hull, hearing the name, crawled from the hole we had dug to shelter us from the wind and cold, where he was lying while I was preparing

our frugal repast. The man who accosted us was the sergeant who had charge of the ninth thousand, and accidentally came across us. He said we must go over to the ninth with him. We tried to explain to him that it would not help them any by our suffering now, and that he ought to look upon it differently than he would had we caused the trouble intentionally; but we had to go.

He was one of those men who soar as high and realize nearly as much comfort and honor from imaginary greatness as from the real thing, besides being totally destitute of any kind of friendly feelings toward an unfortunate fellow-being. After talking to us in an abusive manner for a short time, he ordered two Irishmen to take us before Stanton—the Chief of Police. Hull said when on the way: "This means almost death, and I have a mind to step across the dead line and thus put an end to my sufferings and at the same time escape the disgrace that will most likely be our lot if we appear before that brute who for six months has disgraced the name of Chief of Police." I sincerely believe that any ex-prisoner who knew this man will corroborate my statement, when I affirm that he, who by some means had been chosen to act

in this capacity, frequently inflicted punishment upon those emaciated forms that was cruel and heart-rending to witness.

I had frequently seen the inhuman treatment which, for the slightest offense, many of my starving comrades had been subjected to at the hand of this unfeeling wretch, but never did I harbor the thought that it would be my lot to face the shame and disgrace of being publicly whipped for what I considered no crime, and that by the order of one who was universally known as a low pugilist. All knew his record as a soldier had been won during his incarceration, as he came too direct from the place where he was drafted to the prison pen to receive any war record worthy of note. Therefore, the thought that old soldiers or men who had honorably and willingly enlisted and unflinchingly defended the flag of their country, through the darkest days of adversity, were to be thus treated, and by such a character, seemed hard indeed. It seemed as if Comrade Hull and myself for a long time had endured all the hardships, suffering and torture that rebel ingenuity was capable of inflicting, and had endeavored to bear unflinchingly the yoke of injustice and oppression, but this seemed the last act in the drama; and that we should

submit to this contemptible wretch appeared to us more than we could bear.

We had gone about half the distance from the ninth battalion to police headquarters, when our two escorts commenced talking to us about our situation; one of them said to his comrade:

"Faith, Mike, what d'ye think of a blaggard that will bate the nearly bare bones of a poor divil, merely for chating the frog-atin, gander-legged greybacks out of a pint of male?"

"Ah, an' by the powers of St. Pathrick, it's the heft of a black-thorn that he nades on his own impty head, an' so he does," says the other, and turning to us he said:

"Lads, is this all the diviltry yez have been up to?"

We told him of the charges against us, when one of them said to the other:

"Oi've a mind to let um schkip."

Seeing there was some hope of escape, I said:

"If you allow us to go free, I believe you will never be sorry."

They looked at each other for a moment, and around them, as if to make sure no one was listening to the con-

versation, and one of them, pointing toward the opposite side of the camp, said :

“Take to your hales, me lads, and don’t show up on this side of the brook, rashuns or no rashuns, dy’ye mind?”

And I can assure you, gentle reader, that we did exactly as our benefactors told us to do ; and I am Ireland’s friend to the last.



## CHAPTER XVII.

There were about twelve thousand men in Florence; the camp was laid out the same as at Andersonville and surrounded by the same kind of fortifications, but it was only half as large. After we had remained there six or eight weeks, the rebels erected three sheds, forty or fifty feet in length. They were erected in one corner of the stockade and used for a hospital. There were no walls to these sheds excepting the posts, and when it rained and the wind blew, the inmates were nearly as bad off as if they were outside. It was my lot to sleep within two hundred feet of this rendezvous of suffering, and night after night as I listened to the shrieks of those who were bereft of reason, the moans of the dying, I exclaimed: "I would to God that this heart-rending wail might echo in every home whose owners have the power to alleviate the sufferings I now witness."

The 27th of November the camp was thrown into intense excitement when an officer came in and informed us that the next day four hundred of the sick were going

to be paroled. That meant men who could be moved, but not one in twenty of those under the sheds were able to go. The commanding officer came in and ordered the first thousand to fall in near the gate and between the dead line and the stockade. This ground was selected because it afforded ample room and because the dead line prevented the other prisoners from approaching those who were undergoing an examination. It was at first reported that three men were to be chosen from each hundred, thirty from each thousand, making four hundred from the camp of twelve thousand, there being about that number at this time. But seeing that this was going to be too much work, and require too much time, only four or five thousand were formed from which to select the required number. Comrade Hull, being one of the fourth thousand, happened to be one of those who were chosen. While the doctor was walking before each hundred, scrutinizing each man and occasionally asking questions of them regarding their imprisonment, hundreds of forlorn looking creatures pressed closely to the dead line, that they might see if any acquaintance or comrade was numbered among the accepted. As I saw Hull step from the ranks and join those who had been chosen, I realized that I was the

only one left of our family of thirteen who ten months before, as we entered Andersonville, vowed to befriend each other and remain together during our imprisonment unless the messenger of death should break our ranks. Yes, I was alone. Although thousands of men were within speaking distance, I was comparatively alone. There were several members of my own regiment in the prison, but I had not seen them since we left Andersonville. As soon as I saw that Hull was going, I returned to the place where we had slept for the past three months and wrote a letter to my mother; and, although my writing materials were not of the best, consisting of a piece of white birch bark and a stub pencil, nevertheless they were sufficient to convey the idea that I was all right and as happy as could be. I omitted the rest of the sentence, *under the circumstances in a rebel prison hell*. I gave it to him to mail, and requested him to write to my people, as soon as he reached our lines; but in no way inform them of the terrible condition we were in. As he passed out of the gate I waved him adieu, and walked back to our camp-ground with a sad heart indeed. I remained for some time seated on the ground with my face buried in my hands. My thoughts wandered to my far away

home in the old Green Mountain State, and then back again to my present sad condition. Must I die in this dreadful place? No! I exclaimed aloud. No, I cannot; and as I raised to my feet, a voice by my side said:

“What is it that you ain’t going to do?”

“I’m not going to die in this hole if I can help it.”

“Wall, I don’t know as I can blame a fellar for forming that resolution. Sometimes during the ten months that I have been knocking about in these bull-pens, I’ve though I was going to turn up my toes, but as no one appeared to care, and I was a little stuffy, I thought I would hold out as long as I could, just to bother the Johnnies.”

He then laughed heartily, and immediately asked me the question asked so many millions of times by one soldier of another during the four years of the war. “What regiment do you belong to?” I told him, and found him to be a member of the Fifth Michigan Cavalry in the same brigade as my own. After talking awhile he informed me that his partner (tent mate, he called him) had just gone with the paroled prisoners. We at once agreed to form a partnership, and with my old oyster can, half a canteen and about two-thirds of an old army blanket, that

comprised the whole of our worldly effects, we were prepared to meet the combined forces of the rebel hosts, with all their ingenious modes of murdering according to law. Yes, we would yet live to see Jeff Davis and his followers dance Yankee Doodle in mid-air with the devil for prompter, and his imps for partners. I saw I had struck the right man in the right time, if not in the right place. His name was Frank McGee. He was a true type of the back-woodsman; full of courage, with a large heart and apparently he could even find enjoyment in the toothache. He informed me that he owned a building lot down near the brook, and as we were to live together, he wished me to go with him and look it over, and then we would decide which lot we would occupy, his or mine. After looking over the ground, we decided my place would be preferable, as it was near the gate, thus allowing us to see what was going on. But had we known of the cold rain storm that so soon burst upon us, a rain storm that drenched the unhappy inmates for days and nights in succession, with scarcely sun sufficient to dry our few clothes during this time; had we known that the dead would be brought to the gate and there be left for twenty-four hours before they were drawn away, instead of being

picked up and carried outside each morning, as the rebels had previously been in the habit of doing, I say if we could have known all this, we should most decidedly have chosen the ground that Comrade McGee had without reserve bargained for, sold and conveyed to some Jersey soldiers for five buttons and four chews of tobacco, a few days before.

Abuse, hardships and constant suffering had driven some of the men to a state of depravity almost bordering on insanity. They seemed not only to despise the instigators of their suffering, but everyone with whom they came in contact, let him be friend or foe. As it was useless to try to find other quarters farther from the scenes of such annoying nature, we at once commenced arranging some kind of a place to sleep that would partially protect us from the cold night air, if not from the rain. The characteristics of my new found friend gave promise of improvement in my prison life so long as we were permitted to remain together. As he came along with part of an old army blanket hanging from his arm, he halted in front of me and, throwing it down exclaimed: "United we stand, divided we freeze." At this time, November 20th, the weather was warm and pleasant, speci-

ally in the day time, but the nights were quite cold, at least it appeared so to us, who were obliged to use the bare cold ground for our bed and the canopy of heaven for shelter.

Believing the maxim, "Make hay when the sun shines," a wise one, the following day we commenced making bricks for the purpose of building a house. To do this, we went to the brook and with our hands and the half of a canteen, managed to dig clay from the bed of the stream, and with the aid of a small wooden trowel, converted this soap clay, as it was called, into bricks about three-fourths the size of an ordinary brick. They were of a reddish gray color, and after we had dried them in the hot sun for three or four days, they became quite hard. By carefully laying them closely together and two deep, we erected the body to our house, size 5x7 feet, and about 4 feet in height. The tops of the walls were slightly drawn in and on a stick raised above the walls for a ridge pole, our blanket was stretched, thus forming quite a respectable roof. We then built a little fire-place, and our winter quarters were completed.

Many a poor fellow would halt and enviously examine our quarters. Every day we made what improve-

ments we could, and for a week or ten days were as well situated as any, so far as good quarters were concerned. But when the rain began to fall, our house began to show signs of yielding to the constant patter of rain-drops upon its unprotected walls. For the first three or four days as the rain would hold up for a few hours, we would endeavor to cover the affected walls with mud and sand; and had the storm then ceased entirely, we might have done so successfully. But our house, with many others, mostly composed of earth, was doomed. The fifth day of the storm the wind blew a gale, and for three or four hours the rain fell in torrents. Every spark of fire through the entire camp was extinguished. When the storm ceased thousands of men, drenched to the skin, were seen standing in the street with no shelter or fire to dry their scanty garments. In the place where their humble cots had stood, nothing but a bank of mud remained. Ah! but heart-rending were the combined moans of the sick who were exposed to the cold rain, with not sufficient strength to walk. Their moans, cries and prayers could be heard mingling with the relentless elements of the storm.



Men could be seen standing with their backs to the storm, their hands covering their ears, that the awful shrieks and moans of the dying might not be heard. Hundreds of homeless and shelterless human beings could be seen standing with their bodies pressed closely to each other, that they might save their nearly nude forms from being chilled through by the cold wind and rain of that long and terrible night. Upon many a stormy night, during November and December, did the prisoners resort to this mode of protection from the cold storms, but never during our imprisonment did we realize such indescribable suffering as upon this night. Over two hundred men died during the twenty-four hours. What a sight to behold! It actually looked like a hard fought battlefield as we passed over the camp the following morning. Comrade McGee was one of a detailed party to go over the camp, collect the dead and carry them to the gate. I was not strong enough to assist in this revolting work; but accompanied the detail, thinking I might recognize in some of the ghastly remains a former acquaintance, or some member of my own regiment.

I have not the power of language to portray to the reader the awful scene. Men were seen in every direc-

tion dead or dying. Lying on their backs, their arms extended, hands white and wrinkled from long exposure to the rain, their long hair beaten into the sand, and the eye-balls covered with sand and dirt. All this cast a spell of dread, sorrow and despair upon us, mingled with a feeling of hatred and revenge. The soldier haters and Southern sympathizers have since often remarked "they did the best they could for their prisoners; they did not have sufficient food for their own men." Now, admitting this to be a fact, we ask: Is there another civilized people on God's earth who would have held men as prisoners of war, whom they could not have fed? Thousands of Union soldiers who survived their murdered comrades stand ready to bear testimony to the truth of my assertion, that more than one-half of the deaths in Andersonville and Florence were caused from want of fuel and shelter to protect us from the heat, cold and storm.

I furthermore affirm, and can prove, that this terrible human sacrifice could have been prevented by the Confederate Government without cost and with no inconvenience to them whatever. Both of the above named prisons were situated upon the borders of extensive forests.

An able bodied man could stand on the inside of either of those prisons and with his arm cast a stone into the edge of a forest of mammoth pines miles in extent. The stockades were constructed from the bodies of these huge pine trees, and thousands of cords of wood were scattered over the ground in the immediate vicinity of those who were dying for the want of it.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Should the reader ask why fuel was so essential to our existence in the warm and sunny South, I must explain that by eating uncooked corn meal, hundreds of names were monthly added to the death roll. During the cold fall and winter storms, thousands of men perished from exposure; the cold rain and wind chilling their skeleton bodies and inevitably causing prostration and death. Not only would the abundance of wood that lay decaying on the ground so near our uncomfortable quarters have greatly benefited us in cooking our food, but rude though comfortable huts could have been constructed by the prisoners, and for the want of which thousands of men perished. One of the guards could have taken out five or six of the prisoners at a time to gather wood. In this way the guards who were not on duty nights, by working two days in a month, might have furnished all the fire wood and building material that was necessary for the camp. The branches of the fallen pine trees would have been utilized to good advantage in the construction

of huts, thus saving thousands of human beings from perishing with cold and exposure. Had we been allowed sufficient wood for fuel and protection, such as could have been had from this material, seventy-five per cent of those who perished during the cold storms could have been saved.

A few days after the big storm, our rations, of one pint of coarse, unsifted corn meal, were stopped. The first day we failed to draw our rations all kinds of rumors were afloat in regard to the cause. Some said it meant that another batch of prisoners was going the next day, while many claimed the rebels could not get the rations to issue, and many who believed this, were heard to exclaim: "What will they do with us, supposing they can get no rations for a week or ten days? And many were the conjectures among the hungry prisoners until the following morning, when it was made known to the sufferers by the officers in charge that they were in possession of the fact that a tunnel, which they could not locate, was in progress at some point of the stockade, and that they would issue no more rations to the camp until it was found. As the men received this unexpected piece of in-

formation, it fell like a thunderbolt upon the dejected, starved and defenceless masses who, for hours, would crowd and jostle each other for a position near the gate. For what? That the poor creatures might feast their eyes upon the sight of the first sack of provender that should enter. My God! that sight is as vividly portrayed to my mind's eye as though I was now standing upon the same ground, and was numbered with the same mass of suffering humanity. Not only were the cruel pangs of starvation keenly felt by this morbid assembly, but we were compelled to breathe an air oppressed with an intolerable stench, hemmed in by a fatal dead line, and in constant danger of being shot to death by unrestrained and brutal guards.

As the pangs of hunger increased, the murmurs of the crowd mingled with the familiar howls of the dreaded bloodhounds, as they hourly encircled the prison walls in search of escaped prisoners. The third day of our fast, extra guards were placed on duty, as some of the prisoners showed signs of insanity. Many a poor fellow lost his life by pressing too near the dead line. As the report of a musket in the hands of a heartless sentry rang out upon the midnight air, instantly followed by a cry of pain

from the unfortunate victim, the voice of some prisoner would be heard to shout: "Another Johnnie gets a furlough."

But fearing the result of a protracted fast or starvation, the third day, at 4 P. M. rations were issued to the camp, although three days and nights they had kept us thinking we could live on dreams. Only the one pint of meal was given to each man. As it was about dark before the distribution of the sacks of meal to the thousands was begun, it was an hour after dark before the last man received his allowance, and many heard the guards on the towers cry the hour of midnight before their scanty allowance of meal was converted into an eatable form. Many were compelled to depend upon others for cooking utensils, and were obliged to wait for the owner and perhaps the second and third parties who had previously engaged them, before they could utilize the needed articles themselves.

The prisoners at Florence voted for President of the United States in the month of November, 1864. Abraham Lincoln and George B. McClelland were the candidates. The commanding officers of the prison were anxious that the prisoners should vote, believing that they

would not vote for Lincoln's re-election, as they would doubtless blame him for having made no arrangement for the exchange of prisoners. Being anxious to find out how the men felt in regard to the matter, bags were hung up at the gate, and black and white beans were given to the prisoners and those who wished to vote were allowed to cast a bean into the sack, black for Lincoln and white for McClelland. A Confederate soldier stood by to see that all was fair. For a few hours some of the boys appeared to enjoy the scene; it was a change, anything to alleviate for a moment the mental or physical condition of the sufferers.

Once in a while during the day some one would hurrah for McClelland, loud enough to be heard all over the camp. This would bring a smile to the faces of the Confederates, who heard it, but a different feeling was manifested upon counting the votes and finding that a large majority had voted for Abraham Lincoln.

Comrade McGee and myself kept together during the remainder of my imprisonment. We removed the clay from our camping-ground, and using a few sticks issued to us for fire wood, and a part of an old blanket, we arranged a place to sleep in pleasant weather, though



we suffered with cold during the nights, and in rainy weather. We would stand with our bodies pressed together in crowds of from twenty-five to two hundred men. This partially protected our bodies, but those who were barefoot suffered much from cold and the many bruises they received upon their unprotected feet during the long nights we remained in this uncomfortable position. Comrade McGee and myself were among those who "went to roost," as the boys called it.

Just previous to Comrade Hull's departure, the rebels ordered the men to fall into line and receive the goods that our sanitary commission had sent us. These goods consisted of hats, caps, feeting, underwear, woollen blankets, and many kinds of furnishing goods. If these had been honorably distributed to the needy, each one drawing that of which he mostly stood in need, what good might have been realized. But instead, only a small portion of the goods were given to the prisoners, and regardless of our needs. A man, for instance, who was shirtless and shoeless, would get a cap and suspenders. As for myself, most anything in the line of wearing apparel would have given me joy, as the pants and shirt my generous captors nearly ten months before allowed me to retain, now only

covered my body and limbs in places. I was both thankful and surprised when they gave me my portion of the goods, which consisted of a tall, light colored wool hat, while a man standing near by who had been in prison but a short time and was comfortably clothed, received an undershirt, drawers and a pair of stockings. As I called the attention of the officer to these things, he replied: "You must make exchanges among yourselves." He knew as well as we that under the circumstances the prisoners who, by continual suffering and abuse had been brought to a state nearly bordering on barbarism, cared but little for the wants of others, especially strangers. It was the actual belief of not only myself, but many of the prisoners, that the unequal distribution of the goods was made in order to alleviate the distress as little as possible.

As I walked back to our quarters with my hat on, Comrade Hull made the remark that I reminded him of what he had read of missionary work in Africa, how one of the heathen might be seen walking into church with all the dignity imaginable, with only a hat on his head and a shirt with the sleeves tied around his waist. Hull being more fortunate, drew a cotton shirt. As I could live without the hat, I traded it with a rebel sergeant for a

peck of sweet potatoes. We ate sparingly of them for our supper, and after giving a few to a couple of men who slept near us, we dug a hole in the ground and buried them, and our heads lay over our potato bin as we slept. But the next morning what was our surprise and disappointment to find that during the night, while we slept, a subterranean passage had been made from the rear of our sleeping apartment to our potato bin, and all but two or three had been appropriated by some one who had been particular in noting our place of deposit.

As the winter months drew on, the suffering increased. As we were in the immediate vicinity of the sheds that had been erected for the protection of the sick from the cold fall rains, every sound was audible to us, and the prayers and moans of the dying were heartrending in the extreme. These were sick unto death, without blankets, lying on the cold ground, with only a few coarse pine boughs under their emaciated bodies. There were no walls to the sheds, and if the wind blew the least during a storm, the sick would be wet through as though they were lying out in any other part of the stockade. Comparatively speaking I would have been well, had it not been for the constant faint and death-like feeling

caused by starvation and exposure. A man who could walk was considered well.

During the last four weeks of our confinement at Florence, my own suffering was by far greater than at any time during my imprisonment after the first five weeks. Not only were the cold and hunger sufficient to destroy life in a short time, but it was a terrible strain to be compelled to hear the heart-rending wails and moans of the dying, and the oaths and cries of those whose minds had yielded to the constant strain. How many times we said, "Would to God it was in our power to alleviate the indescribable suffering that it is our lot constantly to behold." Night after night Comrade McGee and myself would go to some other part of the camp and there remain for hours, to escape the heart-thrilling moans of the dying.

But as all things must have an end, so must the Southern Confederacy and its prison hells yield to the omnipotent hand of God. It being His will that we should not all thus perish, the day of relief at last dawned; and Jan. 10th, 1865, six hundred happy souls gave their supplications to Heaven and six hundred emaciated forms tottered from the loathsome den as paroled prisoners. As we were not certain in regard to the destination of the

other prisoners who had previously left the stockade as paroled prisoners, we were not quite as rejoiced over the event as we would have been had there not been a doubt in the way; nevertheless, indications pointed to a genuine parole, and knowing that a change of prisons would not in the least bring about a worse state of affairs, we hailed it with gladness. On the morning of the 10th the first thousand was formed outside the dead line, and about fifty men were chosen. They were picked out as the others were some time before. They were to choose men who had been in prison the longest time, and those whose term of service had expired. I had but little hope that I would be picked out, as once before my thousand had been looked over and a few chosen; but they passed me by, which caused Comrade McGee laughingly to remark that I was so thin, most likely I was not seen. But this time I was noticed and was numbered among the six hundred who, the 10th day of January, 1865, rejoiced in their deliverance. As I was so interested in the events of that day, I must give in detail some of my personal experience in regard to my examination and parole.

The reader will remember the difficulties I experienced at Richmond some ten or eleven months previous to

this, and had I been recognized as one of Kilpatrick's raiders, and one who had under a disguise escaped from the ignominious death they had promised me, I would have remained with them as long as they held prisoners of war. I once heard Lieut. Wilson, of Andersonville fame, remark: "The cavalry raiders are not likely to be the first to be paroled, as they were anxious to get into this country, let them remain until they are satisfied."

But the examining physician knew nothing of me or my war record, more than my present condition indicated, and apparently did not wish to discuss the cause of my personal appearance. He looked me over for a moment and asked me how long I had been a prisoner; if my term of service had expired, when captured, and if I would go to Canada and there remain if I got my liberty? When asking these and more questions, I was compelled to break the ninth commandment in order to give him a satisfactory reply. He passed on to the next man, leaving me for a short time as crestfallen a man as there was on the ground. As he passed again down the line, he halted in front of me and instead of saying, "We know you," as I for a moment thought he was going to say, he said: "You can step out."

Never were four words uttered to me that sounded so sweet to my ears or that meant so much. Hundreds, yes, thousands of comrades were gathered near the dead line. Some of them were there for the purpose of ascertaining who and how many of their friends and acquaintances were numbered with the chosen ones, while others were there, as they had nothing else to interest them, and cared not who went or who staid, as long as they were not going themselves. My friend and comrade, McGee, stood at the line watching me, and as he saw me step out of the ranks, he at once started in the direction of our quarters. I thought he felt badly to be again left alone, and had thus suddenly gone away that his sad feelings might not be noticed by others; but my supposition proved incorrect, for in a few moments he returned with our old blanket under his arm, and walking up to the dead line, said: "Here, chum, you had better take this, for in all probability you will remain on the outside for some time, perhaps all night, before they will be ready to start; and the cold wind sweeping across the plains will chill you, and perhaps freeze you to death."

I did not accept the proffered blanket, which would have been of so much value to me that night, but I had

the proof of that man's fidelity and friendship. As I passed out of the gate I saw my friend standing near the fatal line with the old blanket hanging on his arm. He waved me a good bye, and I never saw him again. He was quite right in regard to the suffering of the men on the outside of the stockade that night.



## CHAPTER XIX.

It was about 3 o'clock P. M. when we left the prison ; near the gate were two or three log cabins and at a large window in the end of one of these, sat some Confederate officers with the books. As we passed the window in single file, each man was asked his name, company and regiment, and as soon as they were registered the man touched the pen and he was a paroled prisoner. It was nearly dark before this work was completed. Some wood was then given us and fires were built and we were told to gather around and make ourselves as comfortable as possible. It was a level and open country to the northeast and west of us, and as the bleak north winds swept across the open plains it seemed that some of us must be chilled to death. My own nearly nude body I feared must succumb to the relentless cold, but with a fire to warm one side, while the other was freezing, and with the thought of home and what the future held in store for me, I managed to pass my last night at Florence, though my suffering was nigh unto death. I doubt that there was another

man among the six hundred as destitute of clothing as myself.

We had not drawn our rations for a day when we left the stockade, therefore the officers in charge issued a small ration of hard tack (four, I think) to each man. This was small, to be sure, but under the circumstances it was received and eaten with enough grace, cheer, hope and courage to last for one meal at least. As we were marching in single file past the place where our rations were given out, what was my joy and surprise to recognize in the man in front of me James Miller of the 27th Massachusetts Volunteers, whom the reader will remember I met in Andersonville. When I first met him there he was a stout, healthy man, but now would weigh but a little more than one hundred pounds instead of one hundred and ninety, as then. He was now poor and pale and suffering terribly from rheumatism. We remained together until we reached our lines, and I cared for and assisted him all that I was able.

Just before daylight, the following morning, a freight train drew up and we boarded it—about fifty men in a box car—and started for Charleston, S. C., a distance of one hundred and three miles. We were eighteen hours on the

road and arrived at Charleston about midnight. As our train was side-tracked in the outskirts of the city, the men climbed out of the cars and huddled together near the track, anxiously listening for the reports of exploding shells in and over the city.

The Union forces had been bombarding the city and Ft. Sumter every day and night for nearly two years. The shell and solid shots were thrown from Morris Island, first into the city, and then into Ft. Sumter and repeated. As most of the prisoners had been in Charleston while on our way to Florence, some of us remaining eleven days on the old Charleston race-course under fire of our own guns, we knew all about the bombardment; therefore we reasoned that if there had been a parole, or an exchange of prisoners agreed upon, the bombardment would cease during the transaction. Consequently, the interest and anxiety exhibited by the prisoners in regard to this matter was visibly portrayed upon the countenance of each, as he awaited the verdict that the mammoth guns of the Island were to pronounce. Their silence meant freedom, home and happiness; their voices, imprisonment, starvation, suffering and death. The officers in charge and the guards told us it was a genuine parole, but we had been

deceived before, consequently we could not rely upon their word. But as the hours passed and no sound of shot or shell was heard, the men became more talkative and lively. A Confederate general came to us at daylight and said: "Yanks, you are going home; your boats are lying in the harbor waiting to convey you to your own lines; in about an hour you will march to the wharf and there take one of our boats that will convey you out to your fleet that now lies about three miles from our docks."

The scene changed; voices that had not been heard now loudly proclaimed their joy in song and thanksgiving. Men were seen to totter to each other and shed tears of joy as they clasped each other's hand. One was heard reveling in a strain of "Old Shady—" "Good wheat bread and a dollar a day, I'm coming, coming, hail mighty day!"

We were given a breakfast of hard tack and molasses and then took up our line of march for the wharf, but not before we were informed that if one of our number spoke impertinently to a man, woman or child, who might gather to look at us as we passed through the streets, the offenders should be at once returned to the bull pen. The six hundred—minus three or four who died on the way—

marched to the wharf, and there on an elevated wharf that extended out into the water several feet beyond the rest, we remained for nearly two hours, waiting for the boat that was to convey us to our own fleet, which was in plain view. What a glorious sight! Eight or ten of those large ocean steamers, together with the mammoth receiving ship, the "New York," lying so majestically upon the placid waters of the harbor, that four years before was the scene of the first conflict that eventually called nearly five million men to arms.

From their tall masts the stars and stripes were unfurled to the Southern breeze. The white flag occupied a conspicuous place upon the same lofty spire, and the glorious scene was hailed with joy and thanksgivings to God.

The boat came at last, and as we left the wharf to take our places upon its decks, six of our comrades, with their faces towards home and the flag they loved, lay stark and cold in death. This seemed terrible indeed, to die within sight of home, as it were, after passing through months of indescribable suffering.

The wind blew a gale, and after being on the decks of the small rebel steamer for over an hour, the officer in

command ordered us from the boat, as the wind was too strong for the small transport to make the passage in safety. The men were in much fear that something might yet happen to prevent them from reaching our ships; they would not move, although assured the boat was liable to be swamped or strike some of the torpedoes that were planted in the harbor. They still refused to leave it, until revolvers were displayed and threats made to use them. We were then formed in two ranks and marched to the Marine Hospital, the distance being about one and one-half miles.

The route took us through that part of the city that had suffered most from the bombardment. Large brick blocks were literally torn to pieces. Nearly every building had from one to twenty holes through it from the size of a water pail to that of a cart wheel. Devastation and destruction on every side! The streets were strewn with debris of every conceivable form—nails, tin and glass covered the ground and hundreds of bare feet bled from wounds received by coming in contact with them. After reaching the hospital, which was a mammoth unoccupied structure, we were placed in it for shelter from the wind and cold, until the former should abate sufficiently to

allow the rebel transport to take us out to our own in safety. As there were no fire-places or stoves in this building, many of the men built fires on pieces of boards, old tin pans, etc.

The Confederates, seeing smoke issuing from the windows, came in, and after talking pretty hard to us, calling us "d——" Yankee fools, and many such pet names, took us from the building and marched us to the State's prison yard, about one mile distant. A few of the men, being unable to walk this distance, a mule team was called and loaded with twelve or fifteen of those who were unable to stand. This team formed the rear of as dejected and forlorn a looking crew as ever passed through the streets of Charleston.

Three days and nights we remained under the shadow of the South Carolina penitentiary, awaiting the fair weather so earnestly prayed for by those anxious to grasp the hands of loved ones in their own beloved homes.

The fourth morning the doors of the prison were again flung open, and the boisterous command of the rebel officer to "Get into line!" echoed through the dark and gloomy apartments. Three of our number failed to respond as their names were called, the messenger of

death having again stolen into our ranks at a moment when liberty, home and loved ones were almost within their grasp.

About 12 o'clock M. the rebel transport steamed out from the dock with nearly six hundred as light hearts as ever palpitated in the breast of man. At 1 P. M. the steamer came alongside the receiving ship "New York." Gang planks were thrown from one vessel to the other, and the ex-prisoners were led from the rebel boat to our own by the crew of the receiving ship. This had to be done to prevent the men, who were too weak to walk alone with safety, from falling from the planks into the water. Many of the men would groan as they left the rebel boat, to show their contempt for their enemies.

Soon after our transfer, rations were issued to the men, and through some mistake of the quartermaster's, double rations were given; in consequence many were made sick, two or three dying from the effects. Each ration might not have been larger than that necessary for an able-bodied man, but certainly was more than should have been given to men in our condition.

It consisted of six hard tack, or rather large sea-biscuits, considerably larger than our common army crack-



ers, together with one-half pound boiled bacon and a large cup of coffee. As I divided my own ration and threw part of it overboard, a young fellow belonging to the 5th Michigan Cavalry, whose skeleton frame would have been considered a prize by the proprietor of a dime museum, asked me to give it to him if I did not want it myself. This fellow did not die, but came very near it. Many had the wisdom to throw away part of their food, but could not control their appetites sufficiently to allow the food to remain beside them and not eat it.

The transportation fleet lay at anchor near Fort Sumter, and as the sight of this historical structure was of great interest to most of us, we all gathered at the rail on one side of the ship to get a view of the fort. This causing the ship to partially turn on her side, and attracting the attention of the captain, he came on deck, and in a kind and friendly tone said:

“Trim ship there, my boys.”

This being the first kind word or sentence uttered to us for so long a time, the men again and again cheered the old captain, and in their enthusiasm invoked heaven's blessing on him. The characteristics of the child predominated. The smallest thing would now please or anger;

and these were the men who had faced death without flinching, who had scaled the enemy's works when the missiles of death literally filled the air.

With a sufficient number of blankets, we passed our first night after our release from captivity, and with the stars and stripes floating over us, joy reigned supreme. The following morning a light breakfast was issued to the men, and after the surgeon had looked over and prescribed for the sick, we passed from the deck, where we had remained since our arrival, to the next below, and there each man received an overcoat, blouse, pants, shirt, shoes, feeting and underwear, together with a large blanket. This clothing was all new, and our old clothes were all thrown overboard.

The Cumberland's crew went down with their ship; the Monitor sank the Merrimac; the Kearsage sent the crew of the Alabama to a watery grave; but in all, there was never recorded so great a loss of life as when those garments were committed to the waves.

About noon we were transferred from the receiving ship to the "Crescent," a large ocean steamer that was used for a Government transport during the exchange of prisoners. About 2 o'clock the same day she swung

around into position; the hissing of escaping steam was heard, the monstrous wheels began to move, and more than five hundred voices rent the air with cheers, and we were homeward bound.

After a pleasant trip of three days we steamed up the Chesapeake, and about 4 P. M. of the fourth day our vessel was safely chained up at the dock at Annapolis, Md. Many people from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Maryland were there to meet friends and relatives who might be numbered among the survivors; and as the ex-prisoners were led from the steamer and formed in line on the wharf, soldiers and police were called into requisition to prevent the crowd from pressing too near. Some were there merely to look at the prisoners, while hundreds were anxiously asking for friends.

"Do you know George Cumings?" is asked by some one.

"Yes, he died in Florence."

"Did you know James Marshall?"

"Yes, he is here in the crowd."

Another asks about a brother, uncle, father or husband.

"He died in Andersonville, more than six months ago," or

"He was shot for stepping over the dead line."

Many, many were the questions asked and answered, some receiving favorable replies, while many were shocked by the sad tidings that friends had been starved or frozen to death, or had died from disease caused by the barbarous and cruel treatment to which they had been subjected. While some wept, others rejoiced.

A splendid band of music was in attendance, and the old familiar military airs seemed to revive the dormant spark of life, that the prison hells of the South had so nearly extinguished. After standing in line while all the preliminaries so essential to any military move had been gone through with, we marched to the barracks, some fifty rods distant, and there remained for three days, previous to our rendezvous at Parole Camp, two miles from Annapolis city. Before our removal from the city to Parole Camp we made an entire change in our personal appearance, had our hair cut, were shaved, and after taking a bath, drew a new suit of clothing throughout. The clothing we drew in Charleston harbor and wore home

was sent back for other prisoners to wear on their homeward move.

We now took up our quarters in Parole Camp, where the hundreds of long barracks all arranged in uniform system caused the place to resemble a well laid out village. After remaining in this pleasant camp a week or ten days, we drew two months' pay and 27 cents per day for each day we had been in prison as ration money, and were granted a thirty days' furlough. The reader can easily imagine the joy that reigned supreme in the many homes of the survivors, as they again clasped the hands of loved ones in the free-lands of the North.

Bidding farewell to the sad scenes we have witnessed, I will invite the reader to view that home so suddenly changed from a house of mourning to joy and thanksgiving. The son and brother who was thought to be dead, is alive. He is the eldest of that happy group of children who gather around him. Note the fond father and mother, shedding tears of joy, as they again and again clasp the hand of him "who was lost and is found."

Would to God that there might be the same rejoicing in every home when the fond mother's prayer is so often heard at the midnight hour, asking God to protect her

boy. But leaving this happy family to rejoice with their own, I will ask the reader to accompany me again to Andersonville. I wish to speak of one who gave up his life in that place, and in whom I became deeply interested.

## CHAPTER XX.

Soon after our arrival at Andersonville I formed the acquaintance of a New York soldier named Moore. His Christian name, and the number of his regiment, have gone from my memory; but the picture of that sad and melancholy countenance is as vividly portrayed to my mind's eye as it was when I sat by his side, and heard from his own lips the story of his eventful life. He was about forty years of age, and his home was on the banks of the Hudson river, of which he never tired of speaking. A lingering disease was slowly but surely wearing out his life. How my heart ached for the poor fellow, as he talked of home and loved ones, whom he well knew he, in this world, would never more see.

Having myself seen comparatively little of prison life and hardship, and not yet having become "prison-hardened"—as the boys called it—the poor fellow saw at once that he had elicited my sympathy and found a willing listener to his recitals of the dark and bright sides of a life that was soon to end. How the sunken eye and

emaciated face brightened, as he talked of home and those near and dear to him.

"The most beautiful on earth is my Hudson river home," he would exclaim. "Can it be that I am never to see my darling wife and children again?"

Then he would struggle to his feet, and nervously pace to and fro for a while, and again become calm. How I tried to encourage him. He told me his experience in California, from 1849 to 1856, and during the seven years he was mining in that State he made thirty-five thousand dollars. In July, 1856, he started for home, placing his money—eight thousand dollars in bank notes and the remainder in checks—in a small travelling bag, and then taking the overland route. The story of his chief adventure on that homeward journey made a deep impression on my mind, and believing it will interest the reader, I will relate it.

While still within the borders of the half-civilized far West, he discovered that he was pursued by desperadoes, who had doubtless heard or imagined he had with him a large sum of money. Believing that the surest way to elude the ruffians was by secretly leaving the route he was then travelling, he hired a private conveyance and



in a few hours reached a station on a new railroad, fifty miles distant. It was nearly nightfall when he arrived at a small station on the central route. After settling with the man who had brought him the last ten miles, he immediately sought out the agent, to ascertain how soon the next train would be due.

"Not before midnight," said the agent, "but if you are very anxious to go on before, you may possibly arrange with that engineer to give you a lift," he said, pointing to a tall, square built man, dressed in a suit of blue clothes, well besmeared with oil and coal dust. He had an oil can in one hand, while with the other he was feeling the different parts of the machinery, as if to ascertain that no parts were too warm and that all was in running order. He scarcely looked up from his work, when asked by the traveller if he could get passage with him as far as he went.

"I'm going through to C.," said he, "if she sticks to the iron, but it may not be very pleasant for you, if you are not accustomed to riding on a locomotive."

"I am not," said Moore, "but will pay almost any price rather than wait."

"Nothing," said the engineer, as he wiped his greasy hands on a piece of waste and looked at his steam gauge.

"Any baggage?" he asked; "I am off soon now."

Moore took a seat in the cab, after depositing his valuable travelling bag in the tender box, and thought himself in luck, after all.

The fireman, a young man about twenty-three or four years of age, went quietly about his duty. One would imagine that the engineer and firemen were strangers to each other, by the way they spoke, and Moore was not long forming the opinion that the fireman was displeased with the order he had received, compelling him to make ninety miles that night, after passing over two hundred miles of road during the last twenty-four hours. The next day was their time to go, but the engineer had received a telegram an hour before, on receipt of which he immediately asked permission of the superintendent to take his engine to C. that night, which was granted. Orders were given to run carefully, look out for No. 22—the through night express—which he was to cross at a point of safety. Having no train, and a full head of steam—the Eagle, as the engine was called—seemed to jump from the rails, as the sober-looking engineer placed

his hand upon the throttle; and to express it in Moore's own words, the small stations seemed to fade away in the distance almost instantaneously.

The head-light had been lighted before leaving the station; the shades of night were falling and as we looked at the fields, fences and farm houses that seemed to pass us as if by magic, I could see by the expression of the fireman's face that he could not fathom the meaning of the terrible rate of speed at which we were going. Not a word was spoken by either the fireman or engineer. The former seemed bewildered, as he anxiously glanced at the steam gauge and then at the solemn man who did not seem to realize that there were other persons near, or that we were passing over the iron rails at the rate of sixty miles an hour. As for myself, I thought I would say nothing, as in all probability the engineer knew his business and would not appreciate an interference by one who had never stepped on a locomotive before in his life. The silence was first broken by the fireman, who was looking at the man that seemed not to notice the rate of speed, exclaiming:

"We are running fast to-night."

"Coal!" said the man of iron nerves, as with his left hand he grasped the chain and swung open the furnace door.

Slowly the fireman obeyed the order, and resumed his seat, with his eyes riveted upon his master.

"We have steam sufficient to draw a heavy train!" exclaimed the fireman, looking at him in a frightened way.

"Yes," was the only response; "oil the valves."

I could plainly see that something was wrong by the terrible rate of speed at which we were going and by the excited looks of the fireman I reasoned that if there was cause for him to believe we were in danger, there might be for myself.

"Where will we meet the express?" asked the fireman of the engineer, who had just looked at his watch.

"Don't know," was the answer, as the furnace door was again swung open.

"You know we meet between here and N.," said the trembling fireman.

"You know what that fire-box is open for," said the engineer.

"But look at your steam gauge; it indicates too many pounds already."

"And *you* are the man who dares to tell me my business," said the engineer, rising from his seat. "Fill the fire-box, I say, and if you refuse I will fill it with your cowardly body."

I had already formed my opinion, and as the fireman passed me, he whispered a word in my ear that seemed to curdle the blood in my veins. The terrible reality flashed upon me that his thoughts coincided with my own; the man who held our lives in his hand was mad!

We passed station after station, over bridges, under arches. A thought, and they were in our rear. My watch told me that sixty minutes had passed since we started on this dreadful ride. Reason told me that as many miles had been passed by that confined body of hissing, groaning steam.

As I looked at the wild expression of that man's eyes, the pale face and muscular form, I realized what a terrible antagonist we must meet, should necessity compel us to try to overpower him by physical strength. His reason did not seem to desert him as far as the management of the machine was concerned, when as in a savage voice he gave his orders to the now seemingly paralyzed

fireman to "oil the valves," "raise" or "lower" the damper," and that dreadful and oft-repeated shout, "More coal!" I could not but recall to mind how I had once seen a maniac mechanically performing manual labor, though entirely bereft of reason.

A few miles more and we would pass N——, the last station between us and C——. It did not seem possible that he would pass N——, unless he had determined on death and destruction, not only for ourselves but perhaps to hundreds of others, who were at that moment approaching from the opposite direction, totally unconscious of danger. Thus we waited until the flash of light that burst upon our eyes told us that N—— was in our rear.

We watched the engineer, who sat looking straight ahead, one hand upon the reverse lever and the other grasping the throttle, while the wind from the open cab window blew the black hair from his pale frenzied face, a picture once seen was never to be forgotten.

"More coal!" he said, making a sweeping motion with his left hand from the coal bin to the furnace door.

The terrible position we were now in seemed to revive a spark of courage in the terrified fireman, and instead of complying with the order, he said:

"I cannot do it. Do you realize, sir, the terrible danger we are in? Do you realize that at this frightful rate of speed at which we are going we will in less than twenty minutes collide with the express?"

"And do you realize, sir," said the madman, as he relaxed his hold upon the throttle, "that in less than twenty seconds you will collide with the contents of this, if you in the least disobey my orders for the next twenty minutes?" and he pulled from his breast pocket a loaded revolver.

"My God! we are lost," exclaimed the fireman, and his agonized look said plainly that he realized the worst. I feared he would jump from the side of the engine, as I saw him cast his eyes heavenward, as if engaged in prayer, then to earth below.

"Don't be rash," I said, speaking for the first time, and the horror of being left alone with this man entirely bereft of reason came to my mind.

"Sir," I said to the engineer, as calmly as I could, as I did not wish him to think me excited, "if you will stop your engine and allow this man and myself to get off here, I will give you five thousand dollars, that is now in the tender-box, and put it in your hand the next minute."

"Keep your seat," was the only reply, as he pointed with his revolver to the seat I had just vacated. And again swinging open the furnace door, he said in a husky voice:

"Coal!"

And as the man covered by the revolver threw the coal into the hissing, fiery mouth, each shovelful seemed as so many shovelful of gravel thrown on my coffin.

"There," said the madman, closing the door, "raise the damper."

It was done, and all the power and velocity possible was given to the machine that was hurrying us to destruction. How I prayed in those agonizing moments that the approaching train might be a few moments late, and how I have since thanked my Heavenly Father that I was not in possession of my revolver, for a few moments later the heart-rending cry of the half unconscious fireman announced that the head-light of the express was in sight.

I looked at the engineer; his pale face wore the same sad look; I saw him bare his neck by removing a black handkerchief that encircled it, as if to get air, and his eyes seemed riveted on the light that gradually grew larger as it drew nearer. Words cannot express the feelings that



took possession of my brain at the sight. With his left hand the engineer now seized a small rope, when three short shrill whistles echoed from the surrounding hills.

My thoughts seemed to wander; I closed my eyes to shut out the scene that must follow; I heard the click of the reverse lever, a shock, and I was hurled against the cab window by the sudden stop. I saw a flash of light from the passing express, and the Eagle stood panting on the side-track at C—— station!

“Thank God!” I heard the engineer say, as he stepped from his engine, followed by the fireman and myself. His first words, as he took each of us by the hand, were:

“Forgive me.”

“For what?” I asked, “and why this terrible night of danger?”

He did not speak for a minute; then he said, as he held up the message before referred to:

“This was the cause of all. I felt confident that I could make this station in safety, and although compulsory obedience served to accomplish it, I trust you both will forgive me, when I tell you that I have a little one dying in yonder cottage.”

And as the strong man spoke, a tear rolled down his cheek. I walked with him to his home, and as I saw him kneeling by the bedside of his dying child, with the small white hand clasped within his own, and his powerful frame shaken by convulsive sobs, I recognized as brave, noble, tender-hearted man as the world could produce.

Moore finished his story, and then laying his hand on my knee, said :

“Comrade, that engineer don’t run on that road to-day ; he lives in a cottage within two hundred yards of my home, and his children play with my children. He received the five thousand, and he sounds the whistle each time the steamer, of which he is the engineer, passes our home, that we may know he is all right.”

## CHAPTER XXI.

Names and Location of Graves of Vermont Soldiers, who died in defense of the Union, and whose remains are interred in the National Cemetery at Andersonville, Ga.

| No.   | NAMES.                   | RANK.    | Co. | REG.   | DATE OF DEATH. |
|-------|--------------------------|----------|-----|--------|----------------|
| 4579  | Adams, Daniel.....       | Private  | C   | 11     | Aug. 2, 1864   |
| 12092 | Aiken, Wm. A.....        | "        | A   | 11     | Nov. 17, 1864  |
| 11259 | Aldrich, Harvey B.....   | "        | A   | 11     | Oct. 20, 1864  |
| 10664 | Aldrich, Lanson E.....   | "        | A   | 11     | Oct. 8, 1864   |
| 8301  | Albee, Silas.....        | "        | G   | 11     | Sept. 9, 1864  |
| 9960  | Atwood, Horace, G.....   | "        | C   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 28, 1864 |
| 3975  | Averill, Franklin.....   | "        | I   | 9      | July 25, 1864  |
| 11841 | Babcock, Thomas.....     | Sergeant | K   | 11     | Nov. 5, 1864   |
| 5671  | Bacon, Alcott M.....     | Private  | G   | 9      | Aug. 14, 1864  |
| 12585 | Bailey, Elnathan.....    | "        | F   | 4      | Feb. 3, 1865   |
| 3166  | Bailey, James.....       | "        | A   | 2      | July 11, 1864  |
| 4137  | Bailey, Samuel P.....    | "        | H   | 1 Cav. | July 28, 1864  |
| 11469 | Baker, Joseph.....       | "        | A   | 11     | Oct. 26, 1864  |
| 12455 | Barber, Wm. H.....       | "        | C   | 11     | Nov. 16, 1864  |
| 9722  | Barker, Freeman.....     | "        | A   | 11     | Sept. 7, 1864  |
| 3767  | Barnes, Wm. F.....       | "        | F   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 23, 1864  |
| 7886  | Barton, William.....     | "        | K   | 11     | Sept. 5, 1864  |
| 12406 | Baxter, George.....      | "        | A   | 4      | Jan. 6, 1865   |
| 4200  | Beadle, Henry A.....     | "        | C   | 9      | July 29, 1864  |
| 8029  | Bedee, Washington C..... | "        | I   | 9      | Sept. 6, 1864  |
| 6416  | Benoit, Joseph.....      | "        | D   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 22, 1864  |
| 6349  | Benson, Allen J.....     | "        | C   | 11     | Aug. 21, 1864  |
| 4954  | Bently, Merrill W.....   | "        | A   | 6      | Aug. 7, 1864   |
| 6334  | Berchard, Sardis.....    | "        | L   | 11     | Aug. 20, 1864  |
| 5738  | Bliss, Fred H.....       | "        | L   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 15, 1864  |
| 11317 | Bohonan, Joseph.....     | "        | I   | 9      | Oct. 23, 1864  |
| 11747 | Boudry, Andrew.....      | "        | C   | 11     | Nov. 2, 1864   |
| 10371 | Bowles, Lyman H.....     | "        | A   | 4      | Oct. 5, 1864   |
| 4637  | Boyd, A. M.....          | "        | L   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 3, 1864   |
| 8691  | Brainard, Joseph P.....  | "        | L   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 12, 1864 |
| 4037  | Brown, George.....       | "        | D   | 10     | July 26, 1864  |

| No.   | NAMES.                    | RANK.    | Co. | REG.   | DATE OF DEATH. |
|-------|---------------------------|----------|-----|--------|----------------|
| 1068  | Brown, Joseph B.....      | Private  | A   | 11     | Oct. 16, 1864  |
| 4509  | Buchanan, James.....      | "        | M   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 1, 1864   |
| 10745 | Bunker, Clark.....        | "        | D   | 4      | Oct. 11, 1864  |
| 12185 | Burns, John.....          | "        | B   | 7      | Nov. 28, 1864  |
| 8315  | Burrows, Hiram.....       | "        | F   | 11     | Sept. 10, 1864 |
| 12239 | Butler, Albert S.....     | "        | L   | 11     | Dec. 6, 1864   |
| 10431 | Buxton, Chas. B.....      | "        | A   | 4      | Oct. 6, 1864   |
| 6806  | Camere, Phillip.....      | "        | L   | 11     | Aug. 24, 1864  |
| 11769 | Carter, Geo. W.....       | "        | K   | 11     | Oct. 25, 1864  |
| 2675  | Caswell, Franklin.....    | "        | D   | 9      | June 30, 1864  |
| 4205  | Chamberlin, Converse..... | "        | A   | 6      | July 29, 1864  |
| 8923  | Chase, Elias S.....       | "        | A   | 11     | Sept. 15, 1864 |
| 2811  | Chase, Mark C.....        | "        | H   | 6      | July 3, 1864   |
| 1228  | Chatfield, Wm.....        | Corporal | F   | 10     | May 20, 1864   |
| 5103  | Chesley, Asa J.....       | Private  | K   | 11     | Aug. 9, 1864   |
| 7361  | Clark, John.....          | "        | M   | 11     | Aug. 31, 1864  |
| 7345  | Clifford, James.....      | "        | F   | 4      | May 16, 1864   |
| 1170  | Clark, Martin L.....      | "        | F   | 11     | Aug. 31, 1864  |
| 2694  | Clough, Burchard.....     | "        | A   | 9      | June 30, 1864  |
| 3918  | Clough, John D.....       | "        | F   | 11     | July 24, 1864  |
| 3351  | Cole, Alvin H.....        | "        | H   | 9      | July 14, 1864  |
| 1973  | Colletts, Joseph.....     | "        | H   | 1 Cav. | June 15, 1864  |
| 6932  | Comar, Wm. A.....         | Sergeant | A   | 4      | Aug. 26, 1864  |
| 8320  | Cook, John J.....         | Corporal | I   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 10, 1864 |
| 1044  | Corey, Chas. A.....       | Private  | F   | "      | May 11, 1864   |
| 5384  | Cavil, Wm.....            | "        | I   | 9      | Aug. 12, 1864  |
| 3817  | Crocker, David.....       | "        | D   | 5      | July 22, 1864  |
| 4883  | Crow, Henry.....          | "        | C   | 5      | Aug. 5, 1864   |
| 11738 | Cross, E. F.....          | "        | L   | 11     | Nov. 2, 1864   |
| 9724  | Crowley, Divine.....      | "        | F   | 11     | Aug. 25, 1864  |
| 7698  | Cunningham, Julius.....   | "        | F   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 3, 1864  |
| 8271  | Davis, Oscar F.....       | "        | A   | 9      | Sept. 9, 1864  |
| 7974  | Day, George.....          | Sergeant | H   | 11     | Sept. 6, 1864  |
| 10458 | Day, Joshua L.....        | Private  | A   | 1 Cav. | Oct. 7, 1864   |
| 6840  | Dewey, F. F.....          | "        | D   | 4      | Aug. 25, 1864  |
| 5927  | Donahue, Thomas.....      | "        | A   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 17, 1864  |
| 6338  | Doying, Francis W.....    | "        | F   | 11     | Aug. 13, 1864  |
| 3068  | Drew, Francis.....        | "        | F   | 1 Cav. | July 9, 1864   |
| 6104  | Dunn, George E.....       | "        | G   | "      | Aug. 18, 1864  |
| 10420 | Dunn, William N.....      | "        | G   | "      | Oct. 6, 1864   |
| 10316 | Elliot, Charles W.....    | "        | F   | 4      | Oct. 4, 1864   |
| 6353  | Emmerson, Geo. D.....     | "        | A   | 11     | Aug. 21, 1864  |
| 12065 | Fairchild, Geo. L.....    | "        | A   | 11     | Nov. 25, 1864  |

| No.   | NAMES.                  | RANK.    | Co. | REG.   | DATE OF DEATH. |
|-------|-------------------------|----------|-----|--------|----------------|
| 821   | Farmer, Edward L.....   | Private  | H   | 14     | May 1, 1864    |
| 5851  | Farnham, Leander B..... | "        | A   | 11     | Aug. 20, 1864  |
| 6224  | Farnham, Lorenzo D..... | Sergeant | A   | 17     | Aug. 24, 1864  |
| 4075  | Farnsworth, Milo.....   | Private  | B   | 1 Cav. | July 17, 1864  |
| 12317 | Farrand, Andrew J.....  | "        | B   | "      | Dec. 24, 1864  |
| 11314 | Farrall, Peter H.....   | "        | D   | 4      | Oct. 22, 1864  |
| 12323 | Fernette, Joseph.....   | "        | K   | 11     | Dec. 2, 1864   |
| 10969 | Fisk, William P.....    | "        | K   | 4      | Oct. 14, 1864  |
| 11351 | Flint, Charles E.....   | "        | K   | 4      | Oct. 23, 1864  |
| 5914  | Foster, Ansel, Jr.....  | "        | G   | 17     | Aug. 17, 1864  |
| 8201  | Foster Horace B.....    | "        | L   | 11     | Sept. 8, 1864  |
| 11458 | Foster, Haskell.....    | "        | D   | 11     | Oct. 25, 1864  |
| 7165  | Forrest, Silas.....     | "        | I   | 3      | Aug. 29, 1864  |
| 8096  | Fox, Willard.....       | "        | K   | 11     | Sept. 7, 1864  |
| 10784 | Frost, Geo. E.....      | "        | K   | 11     | Oct. 12, 1864  |
| 3464  | Freeman, Chas. E.....   | "        | H   | 9      | July 17, 1864  |
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| 5480  | Garey, Thomas.....      | Private  | C   | 11     | Aug. 13, 1864  |
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| 6145  | Hyde, Edward.....       | "        | L   | 11     | Aug. 17, 1864  |
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| 3853  | Jocelyn, Frank B.....   | "        | B   | "      | July 24, 1864  |
| 4690  | Johnson, David.....     | "        | H   | 11     | Aug. 3, 1864   |
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| 3309  | Jones, Hennyery L.....  | "        | C   | 6      | July 14, 1864  |

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|-------|--------------------------|---------|-----|--------|----------------|
| 3886  | Jurden, Albert E.....    | Private | A   | 17     | July 24, 1864  |
| 6968  | Kelsey, Luther C.....    | "       | F   | 11     | Aug. 26, 1864  |
| 7762  | Kingsley, Silas.....     | "       | D   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 4, 1864  |
| 4207  | Knapp, Lewis.....        | "       | G   | "      | July 26, 1864  |
| 6239  | Knight, Chas.....        | "       | K   | 11     | Aug. 20, 1864  |
| 3990  | Knowles, Crowell M.....  | "       | H   | 11     | Sept. 10, 1864 |
| 4597  | Labounty, Hennery.....   | "       | M   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 3, 1864   |
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| 4664  | Laraway, Hiram.....      | "       | A   | 5      | Aug. 3, 1864   |
| 7891  | Ladabosh, Joseph.....    | "       | A   | 17     | Sept. 5, 1864  |
| 8355  | Leasot, Clemon.....      | "       | L   | 11     | Sept. 10, 1864 |
| 12916 | Lumsden, Calvin E.....   | "       | D   | 4      | Feb. 8, 1865   |
| 8865  | Manchester, James M..... | "       | I   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 16, 1864 |
| 2390  | Manien, Patrick.....     | "       | D   | 9      | June 24, 1864  |
| 5073  | Martin, Joseph.....      | "       | M   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 8, 1864   |
| 11735 | Martin, Newcomb.....     | "       | A   | 11     | Nov. 2, 1864   |
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| 7324  | Merrill, Benson J.....   | "       | B   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 30, 1864  |
| 12631 | Monroe, Asa L.....       | "       | L   | 11     | Feb. 10, 1865  |
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| 4616  | Morse, Willard.....      | "       | F   | 11     | Aug. 3, 1864   |
| 1544  | Mosey, Alfred.....       | "       | K   | 1 Cav. | June 1, 1864   |
| 12283 | Nelson, Stephen.....     | "       | F   | 4      | Dec. 13, 1864  |
| 11067 | Nichols, Harry.....      | "       | A   | 11     | Oct. 17, 1864  |
| 6559  | Nownes, Geo. H.....      | "       | C   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 23, 1864  |
| 704   | O'Brien, Wm.....         | "       | H   | "      | Apr. 23, 1864  |
| 4300  | O'Niel, John.....        | "       | D   | 10     | July 30, 1864  |
| 11992 | Packard, M. G.....       | "       | A   | 11     | Nov. 13, 1864  |
| 11041 | Paige, Edgar W.....      | "       | I   | 4      | Oct. 17, 1864  |
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| 5605  | Papeneau, Frank.....     | "       | I   | 3      | Aug. 14, 1864  |
| 11225 | Patch, Benjamin H.....   | "       | C   | 4      | Oct. 20, 1864  |
| 10237 | Paul, John E.....        | "       | G   | 4      | Oct. 2, 1864   |
| 3213  | Perrault, Joseph.....    | "       | D   | 17     | July 13, 1864  |
| 12721 | Perry, Adolphus B.....   | "       | H   | 4      | March 3, 1865  |
| 5135  | Phelps, Harmon W.....    | "       | H   | 9      | Aug. 9, 1864   |
| 12198 | Pike, Norimon T.....     | "       | I   | 4      | Nov. 30, 1864  |
| 10040 | Pillsbury, Franklin..... | "       | C   | 4      | Sept. 29, 1864 |

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|-------|-------------------------|----------|-----|--------|----------------|
| 3183  | Plude, John.....        | Private  | 2   | Batt'y | July 11, 1864  |
| 4983  | Preston, Thad's R.....  | "        | A   | 11     | Aug. 7, 1864   |
| 1426  | Ranney, Antoine.....    | "        | A   | 4      | Oct. 24, 1864  |
| 6699  | Ransom, Geo. W.....     | "        | L   | 11     | Aug. 23, 1864  |
| 11009 | Raymo, F. A.....        | "        | F   | 11     | Oct. 16, 1864  |
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| 1888  | Reed, Dean W.....       | "        | H   | 1 Cav. | June 13, 1864  |
| 13691 | Rice, Fred W.....       | "        | F   | 4      | Oct. 31, 1864  |
| 8138  | Roberts, J. M.....      | "        | K   | 11     | Sept. 7, 1864  |
| 7697  | Roscoe, Curtis W.....   | "        | H   | 11     | Sept. 3, 1864  |
| 9894  | Ross, Horace F.....     | "        | K   | 11     | Sept. 27, 1864 |
| 6096  | Sanborn, Henry M.....   | "        | G   | 4      | Oct. 11, 1864  |
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| 15911 | Scott, Geo. W.....      | "        | C   | 1 Cav. | Aug. 17, 1864  |
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| 4580  | Seward, Orange.....     | "        | C   | 5      | Aug. 2, 1864   |
| 12514 | Shea, John.....         | "        | K   | 1 Cav. | Jan. 8, 1865   |
| 10897 | Sheldon, Harry G.....   | "        | M   | "      | Oct. 14, 1864  |
| 12552 | Sheldon, John.....      | "        | K   | "      | Jan. 29, 1865  |
| 6640  | Simmons, Samuel.....    | "        | G   | "      | Aug. 23, 1864  |
| 5707  | Skinner, Francis A..... | "        | H   | 4      | Aug. 15, 1864  |
| 2943  | Smith, John C.....      | "        | H   | 1 Cav. | July 5, 1865   |
| 648   | Spoor, Wm. O.....       | "        | B   | "      | Apr. 20, 1864  |
| 7813  | Sprout, Andrew J.....   | "        | F   | 17     | Sept. 4, 1864  |
| 12561 | Stewart, Edwin W.....   | "        | A   | 11     | Feb. 1, 1865   |
| 10811 | Stiles, Azro B.....     | "        | K   | 3      | Sept. 12, 1864 |
| 3382  | St. John, Andrew.....   | "        | A   | 11     | July 15, 1864  |
| 5444  | Stockwell, A. S.....    | "        | A   | 11     | Sept. 11, 1864 |
| 5963  | Stone, James A.....     | "        | H   | 11     | Aug. 17, 1864  |
| 7810  | Sweeney, George.....    | "        | C   | 11     | Sept. 4, 1864  |
| 9574  | Tallman, Wm. C.....     | Corporal | F   | 11     | Aug. 15, 1864  |
| 5823  | Tatro, Alfred.....      | Private  | F   | 9      | Aug. 16, 1864  |
| 6587  | Taylor, Henry C.....    | "        | L   | 11     | Sept. 11, 1864 |
| 11171 | Taylor, James W.....    | "        | A   | 11     | Oct. 19, 1864  |
| 11220 | Thompson, Wm. A.....    | "        | I   | 4      | Oct. 20, 1864  |
| 8436  | Tupper, Hiram E.....    | "        | K   | 1 Cav. | Sept. 11, 1864 |
| 3784  | Tuttle, Cyrus S.....    | "        | F   | "      | July 22, 1864  |
| 11476 | Twaddle, Wm.....        | "        | G   | 4      | Oct. 26, 1864  |
| 11287 | Wakefield, J. H.....    | "        | C   | 4      | Oct. 21, 1864  |
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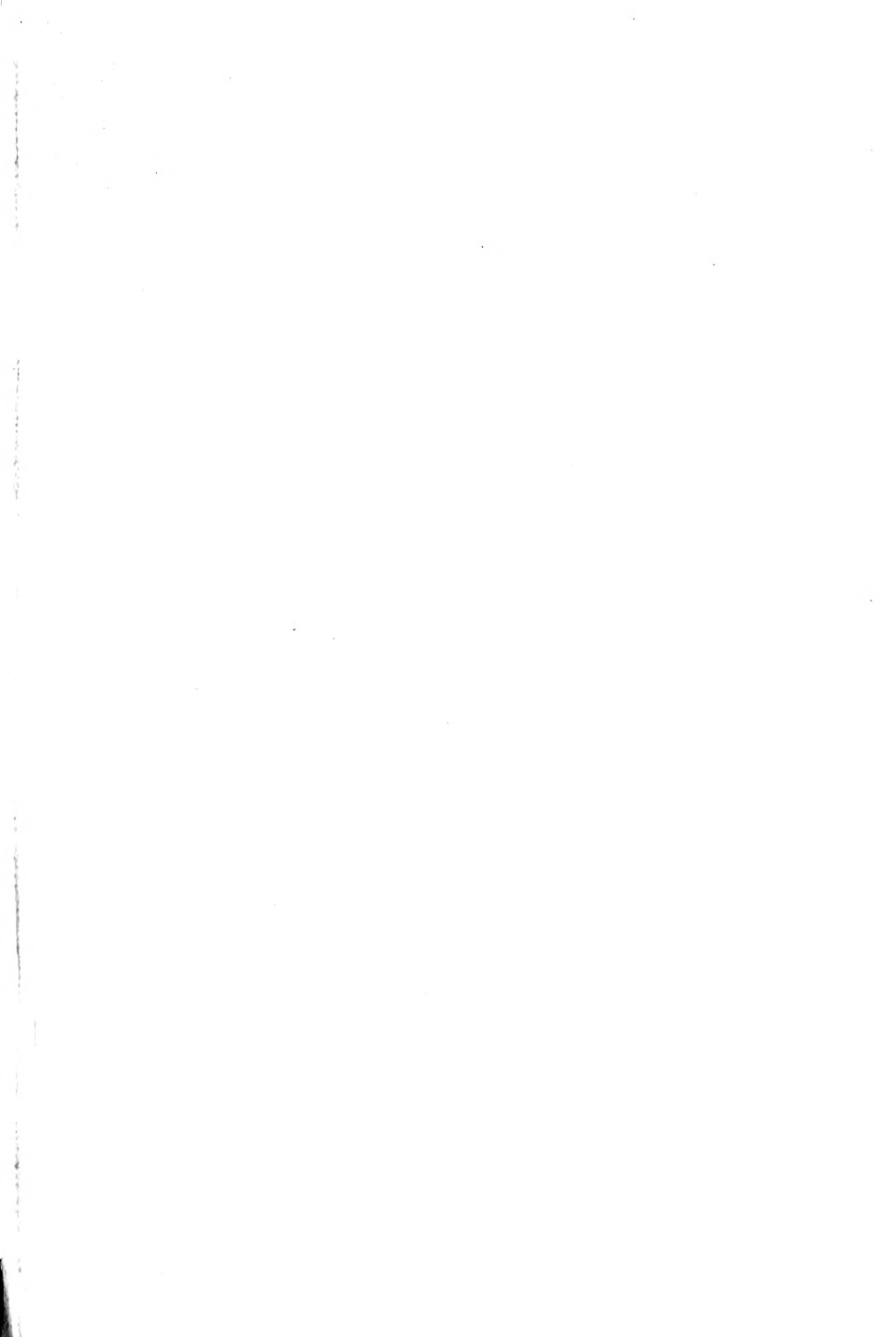




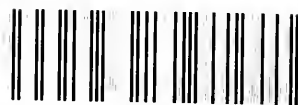








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